

THE CATHOLIC DIGEST

OF CATHOLIC BOOKS AND MAGAZINES

VOL. I.

JANUARY, 1937

NO. 3

THE GOLDEN THREAD OF CATHOLIC LITERATURE

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THE CATHOLIC DIGEST

To the man of robust and healthy intellect who gathers the harvest of literature into his barn, threshes the straw, winnows the grain, grinds it in his own mill, bakes it in his own oven, and then eats the true bread of knowledge, we bid a cordial welcome.

Southey.



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VOL. 1 THE
NO. 3 CATHOLIC DIGEST
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Middlemen In Religion

By T. J. BRENNAN, S. T. L.

Condensed from *The Ave Maria*

It is a common theme among speakers and writers that Christianity has failed; that its day is gone or rapidly going; and that the falling away being so great and so widespread, recovery is out of the question. Another theme is the explanation of this deplorable catastrophe, and there are about fifty-seven varieties of explanation; the author of each feeling that his is the one and only, and that all the others have failed in making the analysis or in considering all the facts of the case.

Editors of small magazines and country newspapers are the chief sinners in this respect. They are never quoted and therefore never refuted; and like a boy throwing rocks at an empty house, they feel they can keep on indefinitely, enjoy the exer-

cise, and imagine they are desperate characters.

I came across one of those explanations of religious decay lately, and I shall consider it, not because of the importance of the magazine in which I found it, but because it is an example of its kind, and looks like one of those things which the writer found in some more pretentious publication and was palming off as a genuine and original idea. Here it is.

The doctrine of Christianity (not of creeds) is perfect. But so far its application has been so marred by the selfishness and ambitions of man, that it has signally failed of its object. There have been too many "middlemen" between the world and Christ.

In far-away Syria, where once Jesus walked and taught His early followers, a sect of people all these ages has preserved inviolate His teachings, without pope or bishop, priest or preacher, to administer the grace of God in broken doses, at stated intervals, by rule and rote, by ceremony or form. These people have simply lived and practised for centuries the golden rule. And in that desert land love and justice prevails among them, and desolation blossoms with deeds of kindness. Gradually the influence of these people has spread, until pilgrims from all the world are visiting the Holy Land, and joining in belief and practice with them.—Sonoma County *Independent*.

The sum and substance of the foregoing is, that Christianity has been damned up at its source by an embankment of "middlemen"; that these "middlemen" are the "preachers, priests, bishops and popes," who, instead of being the dispensers of the mysteries of God, are so many checks upon its flow into the hearts of men; and that then, and then only, will the world become truly

Christian when this whole embankment is swept away, and the fountain of Christian teaching and influence allowed, like the Acadian tide, "to wander at will" over the arid meadow of humanity. Or, to be brief, his whole contention is that "middlemen" in religion are an excrescence and a perversion of the idea of Christ. Now, let us discuss the point.

The word "middleman" is a word of odious implication. It connotes, to the common mind, one who injects himself for selfish reasons between some desirable object and those for whom it is intended.

That such a word might without offense be used of "pope or bishop, priest or preacher," we are willing to admit. But the context shows that the distinguished editor regards them as the abomination of desolation standing in the Holy Place, and as obscuring the light which they claim to diffuse.

Now, if we look around for a moment we shall be surprised how absolutely few are the things of life that come to us independently of the "middleman"; that, in commerce, in education, nay, even in the ordinary domestic comforts, the "middleman" is a necessity; and that if

Christianity can dispense with the "middleman", then Christianity is at least in one respect unique.

Let us take an example. We notice that the editor is attired in a well-fitting suit of clothes; dark in color as befits a man of sober life and thoughtful habits. As to the origin of this suit of clothes we become similarly inquisitive and inquire if he made it himself. Of course, he did not make it himself; it was made by a tailor—"middleman" number one. The tailor, being appealed to, informs us that he only made into a suit a certain material called cloth, which he got from a great Eastern cloth factory—"middleman" number two. The Eastern manufacturer only made into cloth the wool that he bought from a big sheep rancher in New Mexico—"middleman" number three; and he in turn only sheared the wool from the sheep that roam in thousands over his vast acres. Here is a revelation, namely, that in order that the editor of the *Independent* should be clad as becomes a man in his position, three "middlemen" besides the sheep had to cooperate; and, if any of these had failed, the editor would be without his suit.

However, perhaps you may

say I am not arguing fairly; that it is not just to compare a suit of clothes with Christianity; that what is necessary to get and keep those things on the market is not necessary for the religion of Jesus, and that the doctrines of Christ are self-preserving and self-diffusive without the help of "middlemen". That is precisely what the editor of the Sonoma County *Independent* thinks also. And not only thinks but proves to his own satisfaction. Here is his proof: "In far-away Syria, where once Jesus walked and taught His early followers, a sect of people all these ages has preserved inviolate His teachings without pope or bishop, priest or preacher to administer the grace of God, in broken doses, at stated intervals, by rule and rote, by ceremony and form." Now, let us examine this assertion.

If we read the New Testament we shall find that although Jesus wished His Gospel to be a world-Gospel, yet only a very small portion of His contemporaries ever heard His voice or saw His face. He never went beyond the confines of Palestine, a comparatively small district not many times larger than Sonoma County; and, though knowing how to read and write, yet He never committed His teachings to pa-

per. How, then, did He communicate with the world? Simply and solely by "middlemen", whom He Himself selected and sent forth. These "middlemen" He organized into the nucleus of a great teaching and ministering body; to them He committed the work of spreading His message among men. Here are His words: "As the Father sent me so I also send you, go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." He gave them power to legislate for the Church as occasion would require: "Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven." Furthermore, in the exercise of this legislative and teaching power, He promised to be with them for all time as a guiding and preserving influence! "Behold I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

On the other hand, let us con-

sider that form or sect which seems to the editor to be the only genuine and undiluted Christianity. It has subsisted he says, without "pope, or bishop, priest or preacher." But does it not seem strange that whereas the Master Himself wished His Gospel to be preached to "every creature", yet this sect in question has not, even after twenty centuries, gone beyond the limits of "far-away Syria".

We conclude on behalf of the human race by thanking the editor of the Sonoma County *Independent* for his kindly and intelligent interest in mankind. But we respectfully maintain that he has not yet hit upon the right diagnosis of the atrophy of religion. We do not indeed absolve the "middlemen" from all blame; for among the popes and bishops, priests and preachers, there have been some who were not edifying announcers of the Gospel. They are exceptions. It is to the "middlemen", under Christ, that we are indebted for the growth of Christianity.

MAN is obviously made to think. It is his whole dignity and his whole spirit; and his whole duty is to think as he ought. Now, the order of thought is to begin with self, and with its author and its end.

Now, of what does the world think? Never of this, but of dancing, playing the lute, singing, making verses, running at the ring, etc., fighting, making oneself king, without thinking what it is to be a king and what to be a man.

—Pascal.

Therese Neumann

By PETER TALBOT

Condensed from *The Mother of Sorrows*

In Konnersreuth, Bavaria, is an attic bedroom in one of the plain houses of the town. In one corner of the room is an old-fashioned bed and in the bed is a young woman, around whom there has raged a vehement controversy. She is Therese Neumann, the stigmatist.

The day is Friday, and Therese is in an ecstasy of the Passion. Her hands, on which the marks of the wounds glow like rubies, are outstretched toward an object only she can see. The upper part of her body, raised from the bed sways slightly. Her eyebrows contract. There is evidence of the violent strain of spiritual visioning and physical suffering. She wrings her slender hands in helpless agony. Her tongue seeks in vain after moisture, but turns aside, as with experienced bitterness, when the sponge with gall is lifted to the lips. Presently the face, in which exceedingly great pain has been mirrored, turns ashen pale. The cheeks become cavernous. The features are drawn lengthwise. There is a jerking of the body, a spasm passes over the whole

frame. Suddenly Therese Neumann falls back on the pillows: once more she has seen, and shared in, the Passion of the Saviour.

Now the stigmatist lies in the bed in utter exhaustion. The reddish marks on the backs of her hands, as of wounds made by nails, glow no more with ruby brightness. The blood which flowed from her eyes during the ecstasy has dried in dark streams on cheeks and chin. Blotches on the white headcloth betray the bleeding wounds of her mystical crown of thorns.

Therese Neumann was born in Konnersreuth on April 9, 1898, the eldest of the eleven children of Herr and Frau Neumann, simple, Catholic people, absolutely normal as to mind and body. One of the children is dead.

Therese attended the village school, studied the catechism, received the same religious training as did the other Konnersreuth children of her age. When the World War broke out and her father and the other able-bodied men were called to the

colors, strenuous labor fell to the lot of the girls and women. Therese was in the employ of a neighbor, for her wages were welcome as an addition to the large family's meager income. She worked diligently in her employer's fields and stables and tavern and on the threshing floor. On March 10, 1918, while helping to save her employer's property from being destroyed by fire, she collapsed. Her spine was injured, and this was the beginning of the long invalidism, the protracted period of extreme suffering which forms such a pitiful but heroic chapter in the life of the stigmatist.

A helpless cripple, Therese lay on her bed in the attic room of her parents' home. In March, 1919, blindness came upon her, and partial bodily paralysis followed. Then, at Christmastide, in 1922, the muscles of her throat became paralyzed so that she could take no solid food. In the next two years ulcers developed in her throat, and caused choking spells which threatened to be fatal. By 1923 the poor girl could take no more than two or three tablespoonfuls of liquid nourishment daily. She became partially deaf, too. Muscular contraction drew the left leg up under the right one, and constant

pressure wore the flesh of the left foot down to the bone. And bound as she was to her bed, year after year, festering bed-sores tortured her.

On the eve of going to war, her father came into the room to tell her that he was about to make a little journey, and his blind daughter answered the good-bye of him she could not see. Half an hour passed. Suddenly, Therese herself testifies, she opened her eyes and saw her hands and white nightgown. She asked herself, "Am I dreaming?" and brushed her hands across her eyes. The sacred pictures on the walls of her room were visible to her now. To her mother she cried out, "*Mutter ich kann sehen!*" And the mother, when questioned, gave this answer, "Yesterday Therese of the Infant Jesus was beatified, and she, we believe, helped our Therese."

Further cures followed on May 3, 1925, and on May 17. Devotions in honor of Our Lady, Queen of May, were being held in the Konnersreuth church. Therese lay in her bed saying the glorious mysteries of the Rosary. With lightning suddenness there was a light all about her, a light infinitely brighter than the sun. She was frightened

ed and cried out. Her parents had, contrary to their custom, remained at home during the May devotions. They rushed to her bedside and saw how she gazed at an object toward which she stretched out her arms. Her face beamed with joy. According to her own report, from out of the light a voice spoke, "Therese, do you wish to get well?" Her answer was, "It is all the same to me: to get well, or remain sick, or to die—whatever the good God wills". The voice thereupon promised to give her "a little joy", the ability to sit up in bed and to walk. And Therese actually sat up, after having been bed-ridden uninteruptedly for six and one-half years, helpless, scarcely able to move. She sat up in bed and then calmly, with amazing assurance, announced that she could walk.

A fourth miracle on September 30, 1925, enabled her to walk without assistance. Two further miraculous cures took place on May 17, 1926, and on November 19, 1926.

The skeptical who insist upon subjecting all things to the limitations of secular science, have endeavored to explain Therese Neumann's seven cures in a purely natural way, but the

testimony of physicians of the highest standing, of other honest and competent people, the character of Therese Neumann: all the circumstances, each one duly considered, help to buttress the contention that the cures are more than natural ones.

Therese Neumann was stigmatized in 1926. On the night of March 4th, she was lying quietly in bed. "All at once," she relates, "I saw the Redeemer before me. I saw Him in the Garden of Olives . . . Suddenly I felt, as I saw the Saviour, such a pain in my side that I thought, now I am going to die! At the same time I felt something warm run down my side. It was blood." The stigmata of the wound in the side of Christ had been given her.

On March 26th, The Feast of the Seven Dolours, the stigmata appeared on the back of her hands. And on this day the wound in the side, hitherto concealed from her parents, was disclosed to them. Concerning the marks on her hands and feet, this is the naive manner in which Therese Neumann speaks of them: "I do not know exactly when I got them. On Good Friday night they were simply there . . . During the vision I did not have the least intimation of them,

for I was not thinking of myself at all. How could I? I could do nothing but look at the dear Saviour. When I came to again, I felt that blood was running down my hands and feet, too. I could not see what it was, however, because of the blood which closed my eyes. Not until at night did I say to my sister, 'Zenzl, see what is the matter with my hands and feet, they hurt me so much!'

Thus a contemporary of ours was added to the long, historic list of stigmatists. Thus Therese Neumann came to bear the marks of Christ's own wounds on side and hands and feet. On Good Friday, April 2, 1926, the flow of blood from her side, and also from her eyes was exceptionally copious. The wounds of the hands and feet were visible, at first, on the upper surface only. They penetrated inwards, until on April 15th, the Good Friday of the year 1927, they had pierced the members and showed on palms and soles.

On November 5, 1926, the first Friday of the month, Therese felt the stigmata of the crown of

thorns for the first time, but it did not appear on her head until November 19th. On the Good Friday of 1928, which fell on April 6th, her shoulders received the imprint of the lacerations inflicted upon Christ's shoulders as He carried His cross to Calvary.

As she shares in the sufferings of the Redeemer during her visions of the Passion, so Therese Neumann is allowed to share, too, in visions of His glory and triumph. She has seen the Transfiguration, the Resurrection, the Ascension.

Since December 25, 1922, the stigmatist of Konnersreuth has partaken of no solid food. Until December 25, 1926, she took small quantities of liquid food, but since then, she has taken no food at all, neither solid nor liquid, excepting only a few drops of water, necessary for her in order to consume the particle of the Sacred Species when receiving Holy Communion. However, since August 6, 1927, she has not taken even these few drops of water.

THERÈSE Neumann carries on her usual activities in Konnersreuth and receives occasional visitors. She continues to go without food and drink and lives exclusively on the strength she gathers supernaturally while partaking of daily Holy Communion. Her stigmata have become even more pronounced than a year ago.—*News Item, Dec., 1936*

The Spanish Civil War

By THE REV. GENADIUS DIEZ, O. S. B.

Condensed from *St. Joseph Lilies*

Spanish born, Italian educated, Dom Diez now teaches history in the U. S. A.

Since the 18th of July of this year, when the world awoke to hear or read the news that a Spanish General, until then practically unknown outside of Spain, had raised the banner of revolt in Spanish Morocco against his government, our attention has been centered on the Spanish scene by a veritable flood of news. For four long months, we have read and we have been told day after day that the Spanish civil war is the revolt of discontented army generals and of reactionary Fascists, monarchists and Catholics against a liberal, democratic and progressive Republic, and against a not less progressive democratic and liberal government. Small wonder, then, that most people on this side of the North Atlantic find themselves unable to form a clear opinion and logical conclusion of the situation.

Yet, for the majority of Spaniards, even for those with little or no education, the situation presents no difficulty. They may be on one side or the other of the conflict, but, as to the nature of

the issue each group is fighting for, there is no difference of opinion, no misunderstanding. The battle lines are clearly drawn. On one side are the forces of Anarchism and Marxism, with a sprinkling of less demagogic Leftists, and on the other side are the forces of those Spaniards who could not resign themselves to seeing the Spain they loved plunged into chaos by Anarchism or disfigured beyond recognition by international Marxism.

Towards the end of last year, Alcala Zamora, then President of the Spanish Republic, rather than attempt to solve the entangled political situation by calling to the premiership Gil Robles, the brilliant leader of the Catholic Republican party—the largest single party in the Cortes—chose to jump over parliamentary practice, and had a new cabinet formed, with Portela Valladares, a non-member of Parliament and a declared anti-clerical and Freemason, as prime minister. To this man he gave the decree of dissolution of the

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December, 1936.

Cortes, and entrusting the holding of a new general election.

Portela, a consummate political boss of the old style, began preparing the ground for a defeat of the parties of the Right by a whole substitution of provincial governors with his own creatures, and by artificially creating a new party, which he called the Center, and to which he gave the unequivocal support of a government that was only supposed to preside over the elections as disinterested arbiter. No impartial observer, acquainted with the tactics of the prime minister Portela, can entertain any doubt that his tricks robbed the parties of the Right of a sure victory. To this must be added the campaign of intimidation conducted by Anarchists and Marxists against persons of the Right.

On the day of the election itself, gangs of radicals devoted themselves to the terrorizing of voters in many places, especially in Catalonia, in all Eastern and Southern Spain and in Galicia. Under those conditions, it was natural that hundreds of thousands of voters, lacking protection, should become easy victims of fear, and, accordingly, should abstain from voting, or should even vote for the Left. But, even

so, the Rightists would most probably have won the election, if Portela had not handed the reins of government to representatives of the Popular Front before the election results from numerous districts had been returned; thus making possible the breaking of ballot boxes in many places where the Right had gained smashing victories.

However, the accomplished fact was that the Popular Front obtained a majority of seats in the new Parliament. But from this to the truth of the claim that the new Cortes and government were the product of the popular vote, there is a long, long cry, as can be seen by a look at the official election returns for February 16th. According to those returns, the following was the number of votes cast for the different contending parties: For the Right, 4,570,744; for the Popular Front, 4,356,559; for the parties of the Center, 340,073; and for the Basque Nationalists, 141,137. From those figures it can be seen that the parties opposed to the Popular Front, even without including the Center, had a majority of more than 200,000 popular votes. It may also be well to bear in mind that in the election, over four million voters abstained

from going to the polls, and they were not Leftists, since the Left was organized and ebullient as never before. In accordance with these figures it is evident that more than one-half of the nation was never with the Popular Front. But this evident fact was utterly ignored by the Popular Front Parliament and Cabinet, and both began immediately a mad career of oppressive legislation against everybody not on their side.

The Anarchist and Marxist labor unions, for their part, gave themselves up to the burning of churches, to the destruction of newspaper plants, and to the assassination of political enemies. To all this must be added the hundreds of revolutionary strikes that paralyzed almost completely the economic life of the nation. The aims of the Anarchists and of the Marxists—the only ones that really counted in the Popular Front—were evident. The former aimed at bringing chaos into the nation, that they might thus achieve the realization of their Utopian dreams, namely, the establishment of the Anarchical State. As for the Marxists, they were following faithfully the instructions given them by Dimitroff, the Secretary-General of the Communist

International. These instructions were to the effect that the Marxists should refuse any direct participation in the Cabinet, but that they should go through the farce of giving the government their support in Parliament, while at the same time endeavoring to weaken and discredit this same government by means of continuous strikes and disorders outside of Parliament, thus preparing the ground for the establishment of their Marxist Dictatorship.

The opposition had no means of self-defense against all these persecutions and disorders. While the people of the so-called Popular Front were free to do as they pleased, to calumniate and threaten, and even to incite to downright murder in their press and at their meetings; to form armed militia, that paraded under the red flag of the hammer and sickle through the streets of Madrid singing the Internationale and at times shouting, "DOWN WITH SPAIN, LONG LIVE RUSSIA!"; to threaten the hated bourgeoisie with complete "liquidation"; the opposition was not permitted to hold a single meeting of protest; the conservative press was muzzled; all the non-radical organizations were dis-

solved or threatened with dissolution; and the prisons of the nation, built for criminals, were filled to overflowing with thousands of persons who had dared commit the crime of belonging to some Rightist party.

Some Socialist leaders, sensing the danger of the situation, and seeing the tremendous reaction that was taking place all over the nation, counselled moderation; but the Anarchists, Socialists and Communists paid no heed to those voices and instead listened to Largo Caballero, who even before the general election, addressing a meeting of his followers on the 22nd of January, said: "If some day things should change, the Right must not expect mercy from the workers. We shall not again spare the lives of our enemies . . . If they—the enemies—do not let themselves be defeated by ballots, we shall have to defeat them by other means . . . until finally we are able to plant the red flag of Socialism wherever we choose." The two most prominent Catholic Deputies, Gil Robles and Calvo Sotelo, brought to Parliament time and again long lists of acts of terrorism perpetrated by the Left Front, and demanded a cessation of a state of affairs that was driving more than one-half

of the nation into desperation. Gil Robles, in one of his many parliamentary interventions, addressed thus the deputies of the Left: "Do not deceive yourselves, gentlemen; more than one-half of the nation will not resign itself to die, I assure you. If it cannot defend itself in one way, it will do so in another. Against your violence, another violence will arise, and to the public powers will fall the sad role of witnessing a struggle which will ruin the nation materially and spiritually . . . If you do not rectify soon your policies, in Spain there will be no other solution than a red dictatorship or a brave and energetic defense on the part of those citizens who cannot allow themselves to be trampled under foot . . . I do not come here to beg mercy; I demand only justice. I do not threaten; but let it be known that, if civil war should some day rage over Spain, it will be because guns are now being loaded by a government that has not known how to do its duty."

It would seem that the solemn warnings of such outstanding deputies as Gil Robles and Calvo Sotelo should have brought the government and the radical deputies to their senses, but to the

arguments of the Catholic leaders they answered only with mocking jeers and with threats to their very lives. Thus the radical deputy, Galarza, who today is a minister in the Madrid Cabinet of Largo Caballero, told Calvo Sotelo in full Parliament that any violence would be lawful against him; and Calvo Sotelo fell dead on the 13th of July at the entrance to a cemetery, riddled with Marxist bullets. Gil Robles was told in the same place by a Communist member: "Senor Gil Robles, I do not know how you will die, but I do know that you will die with your boots on."

In the United States and Canada they persist in calling the supporters of the Madrid faction "loyalists", "liberals" and "democrats". What a farce! Since when did traitors to everything national deserve to be called "loyalists"? Since when have the words "liberal" and "democrat" changed their signification and come to mean an advocate of anarchy and class dictatorship? On the other hand, the forces that are fighting for the

sacred liberties of Spain are termed "rebels" and "fascists". Why "rebels"? Because they refuse to be oppressed and killed by a tyrant that is called Government. And why "fascists"? Because they oppose with armed force and with the shedding of their own blood the establishment in their beloved country of a communist dictatorship. The Spanish Catholics are simply patriots who are fighting for Spain and for civilization. Twenty centuries of Christian civilization are behind them, giving them their support.

They are fighting for God, for their land and for their dead; they are fighting for their women, for their children, for the Cross and for the Church; they are fighting for the pictures of Velazquez and for the dramas of Lope, for the Quixote and for the Escorial; they are fighting for all the creations and all the values of twenty centuries of Christian culture. They are fighting also for the Parthenon, and for St. Peter's in Rome, because they are fighting for Europe and for the world.



In settling an island, the first building erected by a Spaniard would be a church, by a Frenchman a fort, by a Dutchman a warehouse, and by an Englishman an ale house.—*Hazzlett's English Proverbs*.

Sigrid Undset

By NORBERT J. MISSLER, C. PP. S.

Condensed from *Nuntius Aulae*

At the turn of the first millennium of the Christian era the first beginnings of Christianity were made in Norway. The viking spirit of Olav Haraaldson turned its full energy toward the evangelization of the Norwegians. Legend has it that he was bidden to return after death and become king of Norway forever. The sagas tell us the many interesting stories of war, and the heroic persistency which accompanied his efforts in wresting his subjects from paganism and superstition, and leading them into the fold of Christianity.

Gradually but surely the seed of the Gospel took firm hold on this people of strong passions and sturdy nature. The sacrifice of children and the worship of Thor gave way to the true Sacrifice of the Mass which became the center and heart of the social life of the people. Norway became thoroughly Catholic. The people fashioned their lives after the teachings of Christianity and swore by God and holy Olav who, in fealty to Christ, held the kingship of Norway.

King of Norway to all eter-

nity?—There was destined to come the sixteenth century and the Reformation. The people did not desert their king, St. Olav; they did not turn traitor. Rather they were deceived; they were robbed of their most precious heritage; it was taken from them and they knew it not. Protestantism was foisted on them and before they realized it, it had acquired such a strong foothold that it could not be overthrown. Apparently history had given the lie to that beautiful legend of the early sagas.

Today there is rising a strong Catholic revival throughout the Scandinavian countries. Foremost among the leaders of this Catholic renaissance stands Sigrid Undset, the woman novelist of world-wide renown. Her life and her work appear as factors whose development will eventually lead to the reenthronement of the sainted Olav as "king of Norway to all eternity".

Among all the Catholic writers of fiction today Sigrid Undset stands out most resplendent. In the estimation of critics her work ranks with the best litera-

ture that has been produced in our generation. Theodore Maynard says: "In her we have a novelist worthy to take a place beside Dickens and Dostoevsky; there is certainly nobody to match her in our generation." Hugh Walpole is of the opinion that Kristin, Sigrid Undset's most famous character, "is one of the great world creations of fiction, and takes her place with Anna Karenina, Emma Bovary, Tess, and Eugenie Grandet."

Sigrid Undset was born on May 20, 1882 at Kalundborg in Denmark. Her father, Ingvald M. Undset was a noted Norwegian archaeologist. Her mother was Danish. Early in Sigrid's life the family moved to Norway and lived in Christiania (now Oslo), always occupying homes in the dingy and smoky parts of the city in order to be near the University for the convenience of the ailing father. These first and important years of her life are told most aptly and wonderfully in her first autobiographical work, "The Longest Years". The most important single factor in her life before the age of twelve was her father, from whom she acquired that knowledge of the Middle Ages which enabled her to produce

such vivid representations of life in those times.

After her father's death she attended the women's college at Oslo and then took up work as a stenographer for ten years. She found such employment dull and uninteresting and gave it up to apply her talents to better things. In 1911 she published "Jenny", the first novel to win her a wide audience and the beginnings of fame.

The next period in the life of this remarkable woman has not yet been opened to us by her own pen, but one can feel that it must have been of the utmost importance. It was during this time that there began to take place in her those struggles which eventually culminated in her conversion to the Catholic Church after publication of her great masterpiece, "Kristin Lavransdatter". In 1928, while she was working on the monumental tetralogy, "The Master of Hestviken," she was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature. It is characteristic of her greatness that she devoted the entire amount of the "Nobel" money to charity.

Sigrid Undset now lives in a great eleventh-century manor near Lillehammer with her four children. She gives much time to study and to thinking out the

personalities which she endows with life in her novels. She lives quietly, always endeavoring to escape the crowds of visitors and the huge correspondence. She spends her days caring for her children and her roses; and in the quiet of the night she writes.

The literary quality of her novels is due chiefly to their realistic character. She, of all modern novelists, has most successfully achieved that universality of appeal and that presentation of reality which is so essential to fiction. The novels of Sigrid Undset are not stories. They are experiences; they are life. They are not the telling of a series of events with the inevitable final victory or tragic end of the hero. They are a cross-section of life; they are moulded from the material of humanity. One becomes so intimately acquainted with Kristin and Olav, the heroine and hero of her two best works, that he must think and feel with them in their moments of greatest joy and their periods of deepest sadness. The reader feels their stings of conscience and rejoices in their repentance; he bears with their affliction, is happy at their christening-ales, and grieves at their funeral banquets; he is cheerful at their betrothal-ales and merry at their

marriage feasts. The dominating yet kindly influence and position of the Church and the priest is seen and felt in every detail of life in her medieval novels. The great Gothic cathedrals, the fascinating liturgy, the chanting of the Office by the monks—all become real and present as we follow, or rather live with, Kristin in her visits to Christiania or her conversations with the kindly and saintly Brother Edwin, and Olav in his stay at the cathedral in Hamar or his exile to Sweden. The gallant and knightly figure of Erlend is so human that one cannot fail to love him even while one detests his frequent failings and faults. The noble and upright Lavrans is regarded with respect but not with fear. The depth of his sorrow and anguish when he becomes aware of his daughter's sin and misfortune is portrayed in a scene so touching and human that it leaves an indelible impression on the reader. The loving and tender wife Ragnfrid, who is morbidly remorseful for the sin of her youth, is obsessed with a desire to make suitable atonement by her industry and faithfulness to her husband.

In the background of "Kristin Lavransdatter" and "The Master of Hestviken" Sigrid Undset

has portrayed the whole life of medieval Norway. The abundance of detail, the accuracy, the warmth of description create a fitting atmosphere for the action of the many characters. The works are thoroughly done; everything is portrayed: splendid feudal manors, colorful tapestries, hearth fires, ancestral arms and silver tankards, boxbeds and sleeping lofts, outhouses, homes, cloisters, medieval churches, costumes of the period, rings and brooches, and the various weapons, bride-ales, christening-ales, wakes, drinking feasts, stately marriage ceremonies, church festivals and religious processions; the traditional beliefs, and superstitions. Indeed the occupations and tools and sports and recreations of the people, the housewifely arts, the primitive educational and medicinal practices, the systems of land tenure and feudal ownership, the songs and legends of the land—nothing that touches the lives and thoughts and the hearts of the people is neglected and unknown. Everything is vividly and tellingly set forth; and the quaint, distinctive, colorful, archaic language used throughout puts the finishing touch to the picture and enhances the charm of the whole work.

Madame Undset is a realist. But she is more than that. She is a Catholic realist. We read and hear much about the Catholic novel and what it should be. The French critics especially are arousing interest in this problem. In his little work, "God and Mammon", François Mauriac points out the direction in which we must look in order to discover the Catholic realist of our own day and age. Catholic literature which is avowedly propagandistic and fails to give a full view of life from the Catholic standpoint must be discarded.

No one who has even superficially read the two great masterpieces of Madame Undset can fail to recognize them as true Catholic novels. The essence of Catholicism shines forth on every page. There is no character in these ages of faith who is not motivated by Catholic ideals. No one but believes that God has placed him on this earth to work out his eternal salvation by co-operating with the merits won for him by Jesus Christ. No one doubts the authority of the Church. No one denies the eternity of hell. There is no one who does not fear the ban of the Church. Everyone knows and realizes that there is a distinction between good and bad, right and

wrong. "All through these stories the glory and the power and the splendor of the medieval Church is stressed again and again."

In any discussion of Sigrid Undset's novels there inevitably arises the question of her treatment of sexual incidents.

God, in His all-wise creation, endowed man with a body as well as a soul. He gave man faculties for the propagation and the preservation of the race and He has constituted their use as something holy and sacred. If literature is to be a reflection of life in its entirety, if it is to remain a true portrayal of all that is most vital in life it cannot neglect this most important problem present in the life of every man.

Cardinal Newman told us that we should not expect a sinless literature of sinful humanity. Sigrid Undset depicts the whole of life and, therefore, she neglects no factor whose influence is so universal; but she does handle the subject in such a way that there is no catering to lasciviousness, nor can she be accused of misrepresenting facts in order to stimulate passion.

The conversion of Madame Undset is significant of the definite and positive trend of all the Scandinavian countries

toward the Church. The Church has made and is making rapid progress in this far-off corner of Europe. When Sigrid Undset became Catholic she but added fuel to the growing flame.

Her works, even more than her conversion, have a positive apologetic value. She does not discuss the religious problems, nor does she uphold a thesis. There is no direct preaching; the writer is too much of an artist for that; she lets the story speak for itself. Neither is there any one-sided representation of Catholicism. She gives a verbal portrait of Catholic life which corresponds to reality and is composed of real, living, human flesh and blood. Hers is real literature and therefore it is more certain of effects than avowed propaganda could ever be. Her work reaches the reader who needs it. It extends itself and is received by a host of readers who otherwise would make no contact with Catholic life and principles. It does not call forth a spirit of antagonism that begets prejudice as so much of our so-called Catholic literature does. Sigrid Undset is a great writer and the success attendant on her work will accrue to the benefits of the Church.

"Twenty Million Catholics"

By FRANCIS X. TALBOT, S. J.

Condensed from "*The Preservation of the Faith*"

We Catholics should number upwards of 60,000,000 in the United States. Making that statement in another way, there should be three times more Catholics spread through our villages, towns and cities than there are at present. The latest figures total us at 20,735,189.

My assertion, that the number of Catholics in the United States should be triple the actual number the new census will discover, is based on the assumption that every Catholic who came to our shores should have remained faithful to the religion he brought with him from the old country, should have handed on his religious heritage to his children; and that they, through succeeding generations, should have remained Catholics. It is, furthermore, based on the assumption that Catholics should have increased through the natural process of producing more souls than Divine Providence would recall through death.

When Washington and the first Congressmen voted that our nation should be born, there were about 26,000 Catholics

struggling to maintain their beliefs and practices in the midst of some 3,929,214 non-Catholics. Those 26,000 did not have the Sacraments for the most part; they were under the domination of wealthy and worthy Protestant devotees. Some of these original Thirteen States' Catholics were stubborn. They preserved and transmitted the teachings of the Apostles. Very many succumbed. That represents the first set of facts to prove that we should now be at least twice or thrice as numerous as we are.

Through the past century, especially about the middle and latter half of it, Catholic immigration flowed in on a full tide. Some came bearing with them a militant and aggressive and sufficiently well-instructed brand of Catholicism. Others came with little knowledge of what Catholicism was other than a form of procedure current in their home village. The first story repeated itself. The strong ones remained Catholic and never doubted that their children would turn out as good Catholics as they. But, in a large number of homes,

the Faith was not preserved. The reason was too much Protestantized Americanism, too much secularized and too much materialistic Americanism.

Our period of growth through immigrant accretion is practically over now. If Catholics are to increase in the United States, they must increase through physical or spiritual births, by babies or by converts. According to the 1936 tabulations, 63,454 dwellers in the United States were inspired by God to seek our brotherhood in the Catholic Church. Happy though I be that there are so many thousands joining us, I fear there are not enough to prove conclusively that the Church in the United States is dynamically apostolic.

What brings non-Catholics into the Church, what keeps them out? These are simple questions with myriad answers. Prejudice, religious indifference, ignorance, and a naturalistic concept of a full life here below and a not too appealing form of a future life above, are barriers to the entrance of Catholicism into the normal American mind.

But these barriers can be beaten down. Conversions could be had if we were not so timid, if we were not so utterly tactful,

if we were not in such deadly fear of offending.

A perplexing question has been clamoring within me. Have 63,454 Catholics lost their Faith during the same period in which 63,454 non-Catholics gained the Faith? In other words, do the yearly perverts equal the annual converts?

When one thinks of the great number of mixed marriages, of the social advantage of not being a practising Catholic, when, I repeat, one thinks of all the holes through which a Catholic can slip out of the Church and remain irrevocably out, then one wonders whether or not the adult gains to the Church are more numerous than the adult losses.

We have permanent losses each year. How many? Twenty thousand out of twenty million? That would be the answer of the amiable Catholic. Would a sixty thousand loss be an extreme guess? Only God knows. But our duty is to strike just as hard to keep our Catholics in the Church as it is to bring non-Catholics into the Church. Let us preserve the Faith to each one who has it. If we had done that since the birth of the nation we would now be the rulers of the nation.

The Greatest of the Borgias

By MARGARET YEO

Condensed from the book of the same title

Part I. In the World (1510-1550)

The Golden October day was ending as the men returned from work in the bare vineyards, the orange orchards and stubble fields. The streets of Gandia were dark except where a yellow pool of light from an open door fell on rough stones and piled dust. The cavernous kitchens, lit only by little earthenware lamps which had not changed since Roman times, were full of an appetizing smell from stews of garlic, rice and goats' flesh. There was a buzz of talk, not only among the women, but among the men too, as they gathered at street corners or drank crude red wine outside the *fondas*. The "old" Duchess and the young were both of them beloved by the people and the prayers of the poor reinforced those of the Poor Clares that the birth now expected should be that of a boy.

The boy was baptized a day or two after his birth and given the name of Francis. The newborn baby was carried by one of the civic dignitaries, as was cus-

tomary in Gandia, and baptized by Don Fernan Gomez, Dean of Gandia and Provost of Valencia in the collegiate church and the rough, cup-shaped stone fount which still stands there.

Francis grew rapidly. He was given an instructor in riding and fencing and soon proved himself as apt a pupil in the *Patio de Armas* as he had been in the convent parlour where he had received his early religious instruction. Francis was only ten but precocious and solidly grounded in religion. Perhaps it was the memory of his mother's prayers and a realization of the anomalous position at the episcopal court where he had been living, that made him hear Mass every morning and regularly make his confession and Communion on great feasts, and it was at Zaragoza that he made his First Communion, unusually young for those days.

Years passed. Francis was seventeen, a man already, with all the fierce strong passions and the wild blood of the south and

of his Borgian ancestors. He was strong, beautiful, ambitious, clever, fascinating, altogether the Prince Charming of northern fairy tales. It was inevitable that female hearts began to flutter, that the pulses of match-making parents beat faster. The Archbishop decided that the time was ripe for his nephew's entrance into the world. As a result Francis went to the court of Charles V. He was accustomed to splendour at his uncle's court at Zaragoza but he was to find in the Emperor's household a pomp and ceremony entirely new.

A year had passed and in that short time much had happened to Francis. His friendship with Charles had grown deeper and more intimate than ever. Marriage was the only safe course at court and already Francis had penetrated the quiet, dignified reserve of Eleanor de Castro and knew that she was the one woman for him. Often with the Queen in a homely familiarity unknown to the rest of the court, the two knew each other through the Empress to whom both were devoted—then without intermediary. When his heir was old enough for marriage, the Duke had written, he was able to find

an appropriate match for him in the kingdom of Valencia. Matters seemed at a deadlock but Francis found the solution. He knew his father's hatred of being moved, his absorption by his estates, second family and local affairs. If Caesar would let the secretary, Francisco de Cobos, write commanding the Duke's attendance at court to discuss the marriage, terror of such an uprooting would make the old man consent to anything. The ruse was completely successful. It was Francis' first essay in diplomacy and the management of men; and it was a triumph.

Shortly after being made the Marquis of Lombay Francis was taken ill with fever. It left him weak indeed and helpless in body but clear in mind. It was a chance for spiritual stock-taking, for a backward look over five years of such married happiness as is given to few. Now he began to feel the truth of the words: "Lord, I am an unprofitable servant, I have done that which was my duty." The hours of enforced idleness, so interminably long during convalescence to one active and energetic, were used—as Ignatius of Loyola had used them thirteen years before when wounded at Pamplona—in spiritual reading, lives

of saints, but most of all the New Testament.

All was peace and happiness at Toledo in the spring of 1539, as is so often the way in human life before a mortal blow. The Empress died on May 1, 1539. Charles, leaving his broken heart in her coffin, fled from Toledo to hide himself in the nearby Hieronomite friary of Sisla after entrusting to Francis all the last arrangements. The Cardinal of Burgos sang the Requiem Mass followed by the Office of the Dead. On May 17, all assembled for the last solemn rite of burial. It was the duty of the Marquis of Lombay to uncover the face of the corpse and to swear, before the others, to its identification before placing it into the charge of the chapter for official burial in the royal tomb. The scene has been immortalized a hundred times. Francis came forward. The heavy pall was pulled back, the outer case opened. The face of the Empress was hidden by a cloth. He uncovered it and revealed an unrecognizable seething mass of corruption. Others recoiled in horror from sight and stench. There were cries and sobs from the women. The iron self-control which Francis had won so hardly at Zaragoza stood

him in good stead now. He pronounced the words of the oath clearly and steadily. Though not a trace remained of the beauty he had known and loved so well, it was impossible that the coffin could contain any body but that of the Empress.

On June 26, 1539, the Emperor announced the appointment of the Marquis of Lombay as his Lieutenant-general and Viceroy of Catalonia—a post hitherto reserved as one of the highest dignities in his gift, for older men who would afterwards serve as viceroys in Naples and Sicily. Francis Borgia was not only a sixteenth-century Spaniard and a realist, but he was a statesman with a keen vision unclouded by side issues.

During the Christmastide of 1542 Francis lay in bed racked with fever. While the Viceroy was still laid up, an experiment took place in the harbor to test an invention of one Blasco de Goray, by which a ship of two hundred tons was driven by two wheels propelled by steam. There was a successful exhibition before members of the Consulado del Mar but the treasurer, who had a spite against the inventor, drew up an adverse report and no more was heard of the unfortunate de Goray. It is strange

to think that, if Francis had not been incapacitated by illness, steam-power at sea might have developed two and a half centuries before it did.

Two years and more had now passed back at Gandia, years of hope deferred, apparent disgrace, litigation, and (greatest of all trials) anxiety about the Duchess' health. When not at her bedside he was on his knees in his little private oratory before the Crucifix which still stood there till the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1932. One day, as he stormed heaven for Eleanor's life, his soul was suddenly filled with divine light and in the silence he heard the dying Christ speak. "If thou desirest to keep the Duchess longer on earth, so be it, but, I tell thee plainly that this is not the best for thee."

The answer which Ribadeniera, his biographer, attributes to Francis expresses his absolute resignation. "My Lord and my God, whence is it that Thou leavest in my hands what should be only in Thine? Thou art my creator and my all. Who then am I that Thou shouldst do my will? For I desire nothing but in all things to deny my own will that Thine may be done. I beg of thee to dispose of all according to Thy holy Will." The

supreme sacrifice was offered and accepted. From that moment his wife sank rapidly. She made her confession and received the Last Sacraments. Eleanor lay in the great bed in the "Duchess' room", where Francis had been born, where his mother had died. She asked that the Passion should be read aloud to her. Before it was finished the Crucifix had slipped from her fingers. She was gone (March 27, 1546).

The Duke now became interested in the new order, the Society of Jesus, which was beginning its swift rise. Francis Borgia's determination to enter the new Order, still comparatively unknown, was not a rash impulse undertaken in an unbalanced moment. He had been in constant correspondence with Ignatius Loyola for several years.

The prayers for Francis' spiritual advancement were answered by his wife's death. He had sent by Father Faber news of his resolve to enter the Society of Jesus, but, afraid that the dying man might not have been able to deliver his message, he wrote to the General to say that, after due consideration, he had made before Father Oviedo a vow to enter the Society "as

soon as I shall have wound up my affairs, which my conscience bids me do." Ignatius' answer was a splendid mixture of courtesy, common sense, prophetic foresight and holiness. He thanks God for the Duke's determination to join "this little company", which will produce "great fruit, first for your Grace's soul, then for those of innumerable others who will benefit by such an example".

When Oviedo began a public course of philosophy in the palace it was the first time that Jesuit classes had been opened to outsiders. Francis himself, in strictest secrecy was working at theology. There is a large tapestry in the Gandia palace of Francis receiving his doctor's degree after passing his examination.

Part II. Under Authority

Of the events of forty years three pictures remained more vividly memorized than any others, like mountain peaks which tower in the flush of sunrise. The great Duchess' Room, himself as a child of ten, broken-hearted beside his dead mother, yet already catching a glimpse of the truth that across all earthly love lies the shadow of the Cross. That was the first. Then the same room twenty-six years

later, himself kneeling beside his dead wife, having made the supreme sacrifice and knowing it accepted by God. And that other terrible scene in the vault at Granada, where he had seen human loveliness turn to seething corruption.

He thought of those three vows he had taken two and a half years ago, poverty, chastity and obedience. Obedience had been put to a hard test these last four years and even now the world was only to know that the Duke of Gandia was making a pilgrimage to Rome to gain the Holy Year Pardons. The autumn sun was casting long blue shadows from poplars and cypresses when at last Francis saw, on her seven hills, the huddle of roofs, towers and domes that was Rome (October 23, 1550). The Duke bade a courteous farewell to his escort, refused all offers of hospitality. The shabby door of the house shut behind him and his hosts. He was alone with Ignatius of Loyola, in the little bare room with a window looking onto the high altar of the church. Francis threw himself at Ignatius' feet, seized his hands and kissed them. There is a tradition that, nine years before, on receiving Francis Borgia's first letter Ignatius

had prophesied that the writer "will enter the Company and come to Rome to govern it." He realized now that, as always, with the hour heaven had sent the man.

The Duke of Gandia's profession was still a secret which few even of the professed fathers in the house knew. Francis had written to the Emperor at Augsburg, asking leave to transfer his titles and estates to his son and to enter religion. "Since the Duchess' death I have considered and weighed my decision, had it prayed for by numerous servants of God. Day by day my desire grew stronger and the darkness of my heart lightened, though I do not deserve to be employed in the Lord's vineyard."

Francis was to go to Onate, which was thought to be his foreseen haven, but where much was to distract him. The Emperor's answer came. It was all that could have been hoped for, friendly, affectionate, gracious, approving the Duke's plans. The Duke signed the documents by which he formally renounced his titles, estates and possessions in favour of his eldest son, Carlos. The Bishop of Calahorra was at the Council of Trent, holding its third session. In his absence the bishop auxiliary, Don Juan Ga-

ona, came to Vergara where, thanks to the dispensation obtained by Ignatius from the Pope, he conferred minor orders on Francis Wednesday in Whit-week and major orders the following days. Father de Sa reports the elevation to the priesthood (May 23, 1551).

Ignatius had written advising Francis to postpone his first Mass, so as to allow time for the special indulgence to arrive from Rome. At the end of July the permission came for a Jubilee indulgence to be gained on the usual conditions at Francis' first public Mass, but there was still delay about arranging this so he resolved to say his first Mass privately in the tiny oratory at Loyola (August 1, 1551). The chalice which he used was, till the Revolution of 1931, still venerated on the Chapel altar.

The combination of the active and the contemplative life, as Francis said to the Emperor (and as St. Thomas had remarked three centuries before) was the Christian ideal. For seven years Francis fulfilled both. Now Francis, for all his bad health, was still visiting and inspecting his foundations and enjoying those brief days of happiness among his novices and his flowers. He loved the music and the

sound of the fresh young voices in the little chapel where he sometimes spent six or seven hours in prayer and, like Xavier, would remain wrapt in ecstasy while saying Mass till his impatient server, coming back after an hour or more, would have to bring him back to earth by pulling his chasuble.

Part III. In Authority

Francis Borgia reached Rome on September 7, 1561, and was made Vicar General of the Order. After the General's death the second General Congregation opened its sessions in Ignatius' old room. The first scrutiny of votes showed that, by thirty-one votes out of the thirty-nine, Francis Borgia was appointed General of the Society of Jesus (July 2, 1565). Francis' desire to shed his blood for the Faith was granted, as prayer is often granted, in another form. The worn, exhausted body, which he had so ill used caused him a veritable martyrdom of pain and illness. A slight illness in the spring of 1568 was followed by a pilgrimage to Loretto and then, in the summer he went down with such a complication of illnesses that he was bedridden for months.

The Jesuit General was at Tiv-

oli (May, 1571), resting after the work of preparing for the triennial Congregation. Francis was only sixty-one but hardships, work, travel, responsibility and many bodily ills had worn out his body. On his return trip to Rome from his last journey, one bitter morning at the end of his Mass in a ruined chapel, Francis collapsed on the frozen ground and was carried away burning and shivering with fever. The invalid reached St. Jean de Maurienne more dead than alive and the doctors sent to him by the Duke of Savoy, treated him there for violent dysentery and fever but entirely failed to diagnose the pleurisy which had attacked the weakened lungs.

Spring was here in Italy. A little farther south the golden feathers of mimosa scented the warm air. Even in Turin it was soft and gentle. The Jesuits began to hope that, after all, their Father might recover. He was able to say Mass again, venerated the Holy Shroud which the bishop exposed for him. He had only one desire now, to reach Rome before Pius V died, and to die there himself—at home. It was Sunday evening, the eve of Michaelmas Day 1572, when Rome was reached. At last

Francis was laid in his own camp bed, in the little room so near the altar and the Blessed Sacrament. He received Viaticum and Extreme Unction, rallied his forces to make a farewell speech to the Fathers and superiors in Rome. Then he spoke only when questioned; his eyes returned to his Crucifix. His beautiful serenity, union with God, these are the notes struck in all the descriptions of his deathbed. They

had too been the inspiration and achievement of his life, the peace of God which is not stirred by outward action nor by the tongues of men.

The Saint's body was brought to Madrid from Rome in 1617. It perished in the destruction of the Jesuit house and church during the Revolution of 1931. St. Francis Borgia was beatified in 1624 and canonized by Pope Clement XI, April 12, 1671.

RETREAT FOR MEN

HEAVY, rough hewn, they bore the mark of their prosaic callings—policemen, firemen, boilermakers, riveters, mechanics. The dust and weariness of city life lay on them. Their eyes were glazed. Their face muscles fell in the heavy mask of disillusionment. They were weary, "wised up" men of the world, about to do a thing alien to their program.

These toughened middle-aged men belong to an organization run by and for laymen like themselves. Though following Catholic ritual, any man of any sect, or of no denomination, may attend its yearly retreat. This retreat means simply what the word implies—a going apart from the world—a retreat into quietness.

I am not a Catholic. My daily experience is as disillusioning as any policeman's or mechanic's. I have neither time nor taste for fanciful experiments. But I have a deep need, a strong demand for something which will renew that faith and vitality which modern cynicism steals from me.

And I know of no "mental hygiene" program, which can so surely quicken and cleanse a weary soul as this "retreat" into silence—this "becoming again as a little child" in the quietness with God.

Consider it from any angle you wish—medical, psychological, spiritual. Call that unseen Presence by any name you choose—Life, Force, or your own Consciousness. Still, speaking merely as a modern, this I know—in that silence there is strength! God is there!

—Elsie Robinson.

Why I Became a Catholic

Condensed from *The Missionary*

As told to REVEREND THOMAS A. FOX, C. S. P.

(The author wishes to remain unknown.)

I WAS not first moved to look into the Catholic religion by any doubt that my own church (Lutheran) was not the true Church of Christ. The "true Church" question did not occur to me, because I had accepted the idea that one church is as good as another. What first made me go forth upon my religious quest was the appalling scene of conflict and chaos among the various sects.

What attracted me to the Catholic Church was the reverence and stability that stood out in her. And what finally made me knuckle down to an earnest study of Catholic claims was anxiety about the religious life of my children.

I was not much concerned about doctrinal truth. I should have known, I suppose, that the absolute authority I was seeking could not exist except upon a basis of absolute doctrinal truth. But this was not the angle of the problem that concerned me most at this stage. My conversion did not follow upon a long course of reading.

I was merely an American business-man, looking for a church that would satisfy me. There is a Providence in these things. The Grace of God was no doubt leading me on.

I was always pretty serious about religion. What you might call a devout Lutheran. Also I was fairly well versed, for a layman, in the teachings of my church.

Was I bitter towards the Catholic Church? No, but I never thought about it a great deal. The few times I did think about it, I was puzzled. The spectacle of her grand organization and ancient lineage filled me with wonderment. That should have been my cue to do a little serious pondering over her credentials. But honestly, I rarely thought about the church at all in those days; and I think my smug unconcern is true of the average non-Catholic today about religion in general and Catholicism in particular.

For me the Catholic Church always occupied a category quite apart from all the others. A

very real, very tangible kind of religion; and the tangible quality intrigued me. I remember getting a very decided impression that Catholics had a religion which you could lay hold of, lose hold, and lay hold of again.

In those days I believed in the necessity of prayer, in fact of daily prayer. But my prayer was composed chiefly of petition and humility. Acts of Faith, Hope, Charity, Thanksgiving, Sorrow for sin, did not occupy a place in my prayers until after I entered the Church. I prayed, however, for Divine Guidance constantly.

I believed that Mary was the Mother of Jesus. I was taught this; and I could never understand why so little else was preached about her in my church. I had pretty clear notions about heaven, hell, judgment, the soul of man; and I believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of the Father; but about a higher supernatural life I knew nothing. I had no concept whatever of Sanctifying Grace.

Protestantism has lost all idea of a higher supernatural life, if it ever had it. Protestantism has never had much of a theology, and now-a-days none at all. I fairly devoured the Church's teaching about Sanctifying Grace and the higher superna-

tural life, once it was made plain to me. I kept wondering why poets go doting on daffodils and skylarks, when they might be humming the glories of God's Grace in souls.

After taking instruction in Catholic doctrine, I found it easy to accept the various teachings of the Church as being the teaching of Christ Himself. As I see it, there is one central dogma of Catholic belief, and once you get around to accepting it the rest is plain sailing. I mean the dogma of the Church's infallible teaching authority.

Of course the doctrine of the Real Presence made a tremendous appeal to me. The Catholic Church has the wherewithal to feed souls: the Blessed Eucharist.

The doctrine of Mary's merciful intercession for us made a tender appeal to me. I think that here is a great defect in Protestantism. It lacks the tender maternal touch. Devotion to the Mother of Christ fills a deep and poignant need in my life.

But as yet I have not quite fully understood the veneration of saints—the residue of my erstwhile Protestantism no doubt. Since becoming a Catholic I have experienced a radical change in my religious and devotional life,

a difference limited only by my personal capacity, or lack of it, to live a truly Catholic life. For one thing I pray with greater relish and confidence. God seems closer to me, especially in times of prayer.

As for the external devotions of the Church, such as Stations of the Cross, Rosary, Sacred Heart Devotions, etc., these appeal to me only as affording a varied assortment of devotions for my fellow Catholics. Personally I could study, read and think forever on one thing alone; the Mass, which for me is the Catholic religion. Certainly it is the Mass which marks the great difference between my present religious state and the past. It seems now I just live from Mass to Mass.

You ask me whether I am experiencing a joyous calm since I entered the Church. Most assuredly. I have no more doubts. No more arguments with myself on religion.

How did my conversion to the Church sit with my non-Catholic friends and associates? Oh, so so. I do think, or rather I know that non-Catholics are greatly impressed by the staunch fidelity of Catholics in attending church; especially when they see

a Catholic church, like some mighty pair of lungs, inhaling and exhaling crowds of men and women over and over again on Sunday morning. Also non-Catholics are impressed by the zeal of Catholics to educate their children under religious auspices. And I know how much Protestants are impressed by the way a Catholic always calls for a priest to assist him on his death-bed.

Just one more point before I conclude: One thing especially that delights me in the Church is her smiling, imperturbable serenity in the face of all this scientific investigation that is going on. Throughout Protestantism generally there runs a corroding fear of science and scientists. That is why Protestant thinkers are afraid to carry their creed into other departments of thought, for fear of meeting with some contradiction there. A Catholic can consistently and fearlessly carry his creed into any and every department of human activity and speculation. His religious beliefs can leaven all his thoughts, words, and actions, whereas, outside the Church, religion is thought of in terms of four walls and a steeple, open for patronage on Sundays and Wednesday nights.

The Election of a Pope

Condensed from *Externals of the Liturgy*

The word "Cardinal" is derived from the Latin word "cardo" meaning "hinge". The government of the Church is so closely connected with the cardinals that it may be said to revolve around them as a door on hinges. In imitation of the 70 elders and counsellors of Moses there may be 70 Cardinals; but as a matter of fact, the number 70 is never reached. At present there are 68, the majority of whom are Italians. According to the new code of canon law a Cardinal must be at least a priest. The last Cardinal who was not a priest was Cardinal Antonelli (died 1876); he was only a deacon.

The Cardinals considered as a body are known as the Sacred College or the College of Cardinals. The Cardinals constitute the senate of the Church, ranking next to the Pope. They advise the Pope on matters pertaining to the whole Church; they have the exclusive right and duty to administer the Holy See during its vacancy and to elect the new Pope.

The Cardinals are nominated freely by the Pope himself.

As a rule the Pope creates them and publishes their names in a secret consistory, and from that moment the new Cardinals begin to enjoy Cardinal's rights and privileges. The scarlet skull cap is delivered to them, and the scarlet biretta is given to them by the Pope himself in the Papal apartments. The red hat is given at a public consistory, followed at a secret consistory by the "opening of the mouth" whereby is signified the Cardinal's duty of giving counsel, and the "closing of the mouth" whereby is signified his duty of keeping counsel.

The Cardinals are sometimes members or heads of committees known as congregations and tribunals. Just as the President of the United States administers the country through the Departments of State, Treasury, War, Justice, etc., and is advised by the heads of these departments (the cabinet) so the Pope administers the whole Church through the congregations and is advised by the heads of these Congregations who in most instances are Cardinals. These committees or congregations

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considered as a body constitute the Roman Curia. The function of these congregations is to see that the laws are observed, to publish instructions to this end, to apply the law in particular cases, and to give dispensations within their power.

The decisions of these congregations require papal approval and are then final. To each congregation is attached the required officials and a body of consultants.

One of the chief duties of the Cardinals is to elect the Pope. A Pope cannot nominate his successor. He may make suggestions but the Cardinals are not bound to follow them. He can only legislate how a subsequent election of a Pope is to be carried out. The Pope is elected at a conclave (from the Latin *cum*, "with", and *clavis*, "key"). The conclave means the locked room or hall set aside and prepared for the Cardinals who elect a Pope; it also means the assembly of Cardinals gathered to elect a Pope.

Upon the death of a Pope the Cardinal chamberlain (head of the Pope's household) takes charge. In the presence of the household he strikes the forehead of the dead Pope three times with a silver hammer and

calls the Pope by his baptismal name. The Pope is then pronounced officially dead and the fisherman's ring and Papal seals are broken. Meanwhile all Cardinals in the whole world have been notified that the election of a new Pope is to be held in fifteen days. The services for the dead Pope last for several days. During this time the Cardinals appear with uncovered rochets and all have canopies over their chairs at the conclave to show that the supreme authority is in the hands of the whole college of Cardinals.

The conclave, in which the election of the Pope takes place, is a large part of the Vatican Palace, walled off, and divided into apartments, each with three or four small rooms or cells, in each of which is a crucifix, a bed, a table and a few chairs. Each Cardinal has the right to take into the conclave a secretary and a servant. Access to the conclave is through one door only, locked from without and from within. There are four openings for the passage of food and other necessities. Great care is taken to prevent letters from entering in with the food. Once the conclave begins, the door is not again opened until the election is announced, except to ad-

mit a Cardinal who is late in coming. All communications with the outside world are strictly forbidden under pain of loss of office and excommunication. These strict regulations go back to Gregory X (1271) who, because of the interference of European politicians and kings, was elected Pope only after two years and nine months.

There are about 250 persons in the enclosure of the conclave. The conclave opens officially on the evening of the fifteenth day after the Pope's death. The actual voting takes place on the morning of the sixteenth day in the Sistine chapel. Six candles are lighted on the altar on which rests a chalice and a paten. When all is in readiness, all withdraw except the Cardinals, one of whom bolts the door, and the voting begins. Since Urban VI (died 1389) only a Cardinal has been chosen Pope, but according to the law any male Christian could be chosen. The successful candidate requires a two-thirds vote. Each Cardinal places his vote in the chalice on the altar. A ballot is taken each morning and evening until a decision is reached. If no selection is made the ballots are burned in

a stove with damp straw which produces a heavy black smoke. This black smoke is a sign to the people gathered in St. Peter's Square that no selection has been made. When a two-thirds majority is reached the ballots are burned without damp straw. The light smoke ascending from the chimney proclaims to the people the election of a new Pope.

When a candidate has obtained the required two-thirds vote, the senior Cardinal proceeds to ask him whether he will accept the election and by what name he wishes to be known (the Lord gave Peter, the first Pope, a new name). Since the time of Adrian VI (1522) who was a Hollander, a Pope has always been an Italian Cardinal. If he accepts, the canopies over all the Cardinals chairs are lowered, save that of the Pope-elect. The new Pope is conducted to a neighboring room where he puts on the white cassock. The Cardinals then advance to pay him homage. The conclave comes to an end, the Cardinals return to their lodgings and prepare for the coronation of the Pope, who enjoys full powers from the moment of his election.

The Depressed Classes of India

By ANNA DENGEL, S. C. M. M., M. D.

Condensed from *The Medical Missionary*

India has 60,000,000 of so-called "outcastes", or, "sweepers", who from time immemorial have been simply despised and treated as a class apart.

Promotion is impossible, for they are made to consider their fate as irrevocable, brought on by sins and wickedness of their own in a previous existence; in other words, they are reaping now what they had sown before. Consequently, the outcastes know their place; they keep at a distance, especially from Brahmins and other high-caste Hindus, who dread even the pollution of their shadow. The outcastes live in sections apart, usually in the outskirts.

A large percentage of the 4,000,000 Catholics in India belong to the outcastes. What is their daily occupation? Handling refuse, sweeping, and doing all the dirty work others will not do. What is their pay? Eight annas a day (about 20 cents in American money) to house, feed, clothe, and provide incidentals for a family.

The Christian sweepers in Rawalpindi have mud huts with

one or two rooms, usually rather dark. The cooking is done in front of a low stove. Quite a number have a little courtyard which gives them some privacy.

Another type is a walled-in settlement, such as I visited frequently when I had charge of Saint Francis' branch dispensary. There the sweepers are not Christians. The entrance is guarded by a fakir with long, matted hair, dressed in a loin cloth, seated cross-legged surrounded by some hokus-pocus instruments and some devotees. I was told that a modern Hindu sect keeps him there to preserve Hindu influence. I always had a few words with him, and he was even glad to have his picture taken. The inside of the compound was usually crowded. On arrival, I was greeted by some, while others remained apathetically on their string beds. The latter were usually well occupied, either by sick people or groups of women and children sitting or lying in them. When they had nothing in particular to do, they whiled away the time chatting, joking,

quarreling, or charitably relieving each other of cooties.

Each family has one room. The rent is not too high, but too much for what they get. These sweeper compounds are moved from time to time according as the city grows. Near them is usually the dumping ground, an ideal breeding place for mosquitoes and similar enemies of health.

On my recent trip to India I also had an opportunity of seeing a little of the life of the depressed. I was driving through Bombay with two ladies who were out to see the sights of the world. When we came, by chance, to a so-called "chawl" (a tenement house) I had the inspiration to call a halt and invite them to step in with me. A young man who was standing outside, was glad to take us through. It was a long building, several stories high, one of a group erected some years ago by the Improvement Trust of the City of Bombay for low-caste workers. Each family has one room, part of which is partitioned off for cooking. The people sleep on the floor or on string beds which some put up against the wall during the day to make room for eating and moving about, especially for the children.

In several rooms we saw a box dangling from the ceiling with a baby in it. Nearly all the little tots looked pale and had flabby muscles. One can imagine what it must be if father, mother, and three or more children occupy *one* room in the heat of Bombay; but how they fare when one or more is sick is hard to visualize. And one must remember that the adjoining room also harbors a whole family with its problems—maybe a baby is born, or some other family event takes place. And what if someone dies? Just by coincidence, that was not left to our imagination. As we walked along the corridor, which fortunately was wide, I saw what looked like a big white bundle. On inquiring, the boy told me quite casually that it was the corpse of a woman that would be taken away soon to be burned. Of course! What else could you expect? The only thing to do when you have only one room for the family is to put the dead outside the door.

The sanitary arrangements were in the center of the building—bad, but not too bad considering all else. We met the man in charge of the house. The thing he deplored most of all was the lack of electric light in the building which must house several

hundred people. Another decidedly unpleasant feature was that big buffalo stables were built close by, so close in fact that from the windows of the tenement house one could touch the heads of the animals with a broomstick. The screening was small enough to keep out the noses of the buffaloes, but not

birds and bats, to say nothing of smaller fry.

As we were leaving, we noticed a man crouching under the stairs. "He is too poor to pay the rent," said the boy. This led us to inquire concerning the amount of the rent—seven and a half rupees a month, or \$2.80 in American money.

—□—

THE CATHOLIC PHYSICIAN

A conscientious physician can do a great deal towards preparing patients for the visit of the spiritual doctor, by urging the sick man, or his family, not to delay in sending for the priest; by not hesitating to make known the dangerous character of the patient's illness, lest emboldened by a vain hope of recovery, he may put off his conversion till it be too late; in a word, the physician whilst ministering to the corporal wants of his patients, should never forget that they have a soul to save, hence his labors should also be directed to the salvation of immortal souls.

Again, the amount of good a Christian physician can accomplish in the way of repressing vice is almost beyond description. He meets so many depraved, abandoned characters in the exercise of his profession—how often could he not by a kind, well-directed rebuke sow the good seed which, germinating and taking root, might bring the poor sinner under the sacred influence of God's priest who, working on a soil already prepared to receive the beneficent dew of divine grace, might bring about permanent conversion of this sinner. Thus the physician would be the first, and in a certain sense, the principal instrument for the conversion and salvation of such persons.

(From a letter written to a medical student from his Seminarian friend—1886)

Catholic Extremism

By PAUL H. FURFEE

Condensed from the pamphlet of the same title.

In the wide field of Catholic social thought there is ample room for individual differences of opinion. Perhaps the most fundamental of these differences exists between those who feel that the present state of society is, on the whole, essentially satisfactory, and those who advocate a fundamental reconstruction. The first of these is moderate, the second extreme.

Moderate Catholic social thought advocates charity towards the Negro, but balks at social equality. It advocates world peace, but takes no action which would greatly offend the militarists. It talks about the living wage, but becomes very cautious in discussing specific strikes. It discusses social justice, but fawns on wealthy men and politicians. It prides itself on its prudence, its moderation, its avoidance of rashness and extremes. If Mr. Babbitt cannot be induced to become a mendicant friar, at least he may be induced to give a hundred dollars to the Community Chest.

The extreme Catholic position, on the other hand, is very frankly idealistic. It holds up an impossibly high standard which, it confesses, will never be widely accepted. It places more emphasis on the grace of God than on political action. It is willing to do justice, though the heavens fall, and even more ready to practice charity under the same condition. It is profoundly shocked at our treatment of the Negro. It regards social work as a poor substitute for charity.

The moderates propose that we should not antagonize the world, but should rather cooperate in so far as we can do so without committing mortal sin. The moderate believes, therefore, in those forms of Catholic action which the world will at least tolerate if it does not approve. His solution is of the nature of a compromise.

(*The moderate compromise.*) The moderate Catholic strikes a shrewd bargain with the world. He agrees not to urge

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the more unacceptable forms of Catholic action and he expects the world to make certain concessions in return. This compromise covers a wide area. Let me call attention to the following forms:

The political compromise. The moderate Catholic agrees not to protest against extreme nationalism, race discrimination, and the unjust distribution of wealth and income, or, if he does protest, he confines his protest to mere words. In return he expects from our legislators such things as freedom of worship, freedom from interference for our parochial schools, and a respect for the Catholic opinion in regard to birth control. He may even be able to obtain a few concessions, harmless ones, to the cause of social justice, such as the passage of inadequate social-insurance bills.

The personal compromise. The moderate Catholic agrees to abstain from criticism of our more scandalous millionaires (particularly when they are Catholics). Furthermore, he even agrees to honor such men. He accepts money from them and appoints them to trusteeships in his institutions. In return he expects to receive from worldly and prominent men, respect for himself,

for the Catholic clergy, and for our Catholic organizations and institutions.

The social-work compromise. The moderate Catholic agrees that Catholic social work shall be confined exclusively to the distribution of relief, the care of delinquent children, and the like. Furthermore, he is allowed by the terms of the compromise to advocate social legislation, if it is fairly harmless to the world. But he agrees to abstain from any really thorough-going criticism of the present socio-economic system which has made wide-spread want inevitable. In return the moderate Catholic receives large contributions from worldly men for his pet charities and is allowed to sit on the executive committee of the local Community Chest.

What, now, does the Catholic extremist advocate? His program is very simple. Not only does he oppose any compromise with the world, he actually glorifies in the world's enmity. He regards the friendship, even the toleration of the world as a sign that he himself is not walking in Christ's footsteps. "Woe to you when men shall bless you."

The extreme Catholic will admit that political action may be useful as a palliative measure if

we can carry it through without losing our self-respect. But he regards as the only satisfactory program, the living of the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ. In a word, he refuses to recognize as a problem at all the question of the practical adjustment of the world on the one hand and the Mystical Body of Christ on the other. He will consent to no adjustment.

The Catholic extremist hates compromise. He feels that it is his duty to proclaim *all* the Church's dogmas, even those which are most unacceptable to the world. He is not afraid to criticize powerful groups. He is not disposed to flatter the rich. If these tactics bring him the world's enmity, he counts that a blessing.

Which one of these two positions is nearer to the thought of the New Testament? Let us turn to that Book and see.

Our Lord lived in a time and place not unlike our own. There existed the same vile division of rich and poor, powerful and weak, the respectable and the outcast. Exactly as in our own day the poor, driven to desperation, were willing to lend an ear to any leader, good or bad, who offered to make their discontent articulate. Exactly as in our own

day the rich and powerful were uneasy in the face of this growing discontent. They were afraid of a revolution, and no wonder; for the history of the period is marked by a series of abortive revolts.

And now we come to a fact of central importance, on which we can never meditate too long, the fact, namely, that in this situation our Lord gave His whole life to the completest possible opposition of the selfish "upper" classes who were oppressing His poor. I say "His whole life" advisedly, for He began at Bethlehem by being born voluntarily poor. Can we ever grasp the full social significance of that breathless fact? Jesus Christ, the Lord of Creation, chose to be poor. He chose to identify His whole life with the oppressed working class.

After having lived as a poor man for some thirty years our Lord began His public life and, almost at the very beginning of it, He chose to antagonize the rich and powerful by a most dramatic act. He chose the most public occasion possible, Jerusalem during the Passover season. He chose the most public spot in Jerusalem, the Temple. He chose what was to many Jews the most sensitive aspect of the

Temple, the economic aspect. Then He chose to do the most public and insulting thing possible—He raised the lash and drove the buyers and sellers out of the Temple. I commend this passage to those cautious Catholics who keep repeating that our Catholic action program should contain nothing sensational, nothing violent, nothing extreme.

Such conduct naturally merited the cordial hatred of the upper classes, but our Lord's popular following was too great to permit any overt act against Him at the moment. And so there ensued a whispering campaign. Behind His back the opposition found fault with a Man who dared to defy the rich and take the side of the poor. "Why doth your master eat with publicans and sinners?"

At length the opposition became so powerful that our Lord was no longer able to preach freely in public. Then there ensued the period of wanderings, when He lived largely in retirement, devoting His time to the spiritual formation of His Apostles.

It was during this period that our Lord first revealed the mystery which the moderate Catholic can never understand, the mystery of success through fail-

ure. He revealed a plan of action very different from that conceived by the still imperfect Apostles. He was indeed to be a king, but His throne was to be a Cross. He was indeed to end the wrongs of the poor, but He would do so by failure.

After this, events moved swiftly. When our Lord visited Jerusalem during the last year of his life for the Feast of Tabernacles and again for the Feast of the Dedication, there was no longer any attempt to disguise the enmity towards Christ by that strange collection of rich men, politicians, and hypocrites, to whom Saint John refers simply as "The Jews". This was a period of hairbreadth escapes. I like particularly the passage in the seventh chapter of St. John's Gospel in which we read how the rulers and the Pharisees sent hired thugs to apprehend our Lord. But the hired thugs were overawed and came back shame-facedly. "The Pharisees therefore answered them: Are you also seduced? Hath any one of the rulers believed in him, or of the Pharisees? But this multitude, that knoweth not the law, are accursed." (Jn. 7:47-49). Here is an unholy alliance between power and learning. The rich and powerful are quite sure

in their *laissez-faire* doctrine when they are supported in their opinion by subservient university men. They sneered therefore at this strange doctrine which was popular with the uneducated multitude, but which had not yet made converts among the powerful and the learned, the rulers and the Pharisees.

Finally the climax came. As the Passover feast of the year 30 drew near our Lord had a decision to make. Should He attend the feast or not? To do so meant certain death. Yet He chose this death, not because such a depth of humiliation was necessary for our redemption, but because in His love for us He was a Divine Extremist and because the mystery of success through failure was one which He would teach in the most dramatic possible manner to His followers.

The fundamental cause of our Lord's Passion, therefore, was His free desire to die for us; but it is well to inquire into the legal cause as well. For many years I used to wonder why the Jews put our Saviour to death. The Gospel record of the Passion seemed almost a strain on one's faith. It was hard to believe that intelligent and civilized human beings could consent to the

death of One, whose every act during His long life had been an act of love for men, One, whose every word had been a word of Divine truth, One who had gone about doing good, healing the sick, comforting the afflicted, bringing hope and courage to the despairing.

I used to wonder at this. But I have been reading the newspapers for the last two or three years and I no longer wonder. For the selfishly rich and selfishly powerful have always hated and persecuted any individual, be he good or bad, who ventured to lift his voice in denunciation of their special privilege. Our Lord had committed what in the eyes of the world is the unforgivable sin. He had denounced social injustice. He had denounced it not in moderation, not tactfully, nor in polished phrases—but bitterly, with mordant sarcasm, in language which the most ignorant could not mistake. "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you tithe mint, and anise, and cummin, and have left the weightier things of the law; judgment, and mercy, and faith. These things you ought to have done, and not to leave those undone.

"Blind guides, who strain out a gnat, and swallow a camel . . .

You serpents, generation of vipers, how will you flee from the judgment of hell?" (Mt. 23:23-24, 33). The world will never pardon language like that. The world has only one answer for such arguments, an answer which involves, first, ridicule, then, persecution, and finally, death.

So it came to pass that the Jews brought Christ before Pilate and lodged a formal accusation against Him, saying, "We have found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that He is Christ the king." (Luke 23:2). This accusation is a strange mixture of truth and falsehood; but it is easy to appreciate the point of view which it represents. The Jews were accusing Christ of preaching a social doctrine which was incon-

sistent with their selfish interests. Truly He had put Himself forward as "Christ the king". And for this He died.

A maudlin sentiment has represented the Crucifixion as a pathetic thing. And a maudlin art has represented Christ on the Cross as a beaten man. This is essentially a worldly view. The death of Christ is, of course, a thing of infinite sorrow, a cosmic tragedy; but deeper far than this, it is a glorious thing. He was killed by the Jews because He denounced social injustice; but by His death, He has shown us the way to overcome the world—the mystery of suffering, the mystery of success through failure. The Cross has shown us the emptiness of worldly prudence. The Cross is and must always be our program of Catholic action.



"Religion teaches the rich man and the employer that their working people are not their slaves; that they must respect in every man his dignity as a man and as a Christian; that labor is nothing to be ashamed of, if we listen to right reason and to Christian philosophy, but is an honorable employment, enabling a man to sustain his life in an upright and creditable way; and that it is shameful and inhuman to treat men like chattels to make money by, or to look upon them merely as so much muscle or physical power."

—Leo XIII.

The Hell of Hungry Ghosts

Condensed from *Fu Jen*

I was hurrying along to the ends of the city to make sure of seeing the celebration. My haste was an instance of missing the forest because of the trees. From up one of the very first little hutungs I was passing came the cries of children in delight at their father's pretty bonfire; another moment and the little ones were bewailing a vigorous paternal cuffing. The unrecalled urchins had disturbed the ancestral shades to whom the father was offering sacrifice on this great day, the "Feast of the Hungry Grosts", often spoken of as "Chinese All-Souls' Day!" The "bonfire" was fed with little paper cushions, each filled with paper money and incense for the needy dead.

This festival may be traced back beyond the days of Confucius as a form of ancestor worship. In this sense the sage of China promoted it until the advent of Buddhism to China attached a distinctly Buddhistic flavor to the ancestral idea. Hell had previously played an inconspicuous part in the theology of the Chinese; but, Buddhism

brought to China, not one, but many infernos, and, with them, a whole pantheon of nether-world deities. After the Chinese had accepted Buddhism, their ancestral cult still persevered. Hence, affection prompted them to assist their ancestors by Buddhistic rites to escape from this newly found hell. The resulting "Ghost Festival" is a strange blending of Confucian and Buddhistic beliefs. A third element has recently been super-added, a national and political one, making the festival a "Decoration Day" for fallen soldiers.

Being a lunar feast the celebration commences annually on the 15th day of the 7th moon; it lasts until the 30th. Buddhistic theology tells us that the gates of hell are open at this time in order that the "hungry souls" may return to earth for a time and there enjoy the feasts prepared for them by dutiful descendants. Confucius himself merely taught of a life beyond the grave and of the lonely wanderings of disembodied souls. Such souls as have not reached Nirvana, the Buddhists say, al-

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ways suffer hunger and thirst and face a possible, unpleasant rebirth unless aided by friends.

The almost universal participation of the populace in this ancestral rite is quite remarkable. Possibly no other feast can claim so many patrons. A sincere desire to help the needy animates most partakers; nevertheless, for the less altruistic, there is the additional motive of danger from neglected spirits. Even formerly intimate friends may become quite hostile as spirits. Those especially who died within the last twelvemonth must be carefully attended to. The shades of beggars also, and those wronged in life, are liable to become soured, disgruntled and malevolent spirits. Only one group of the dead is confirmed in evil and can no longer be assisted—the souls of great criminals. Nevertheless, even these are today repressed by magical incantations; for, when the lid of hell flies open, criminals, too, sally forth.

The Buddhistic priests have a service they call the "Bringing of help to the needy spirits". A sort of abbot acts as the superior of the bonzes; priests and acolytes are impressively clad in a black gown, over which a pallium of red is slung. The abbot,

clad in his solemn robes, approaches the altar on which incense, fragrant wood and candles burn before a statue of Buddha.

Mystic, talismanic words first "Summon the Hungry Ghosts from the Ten Directions of Space". These words effect the "breaking of the gates of Hell". The spirits having arrived, an announcement is made on the "bestowal of the food offerings". Now, as the number of spirits is more than legion, and since they cannot consume the nourishment of mortals, this food must be multiplied by incantations and also be turned into nectar and ambrosia as befits their state.

They pray: "We, devoutly presenting these vessels of pure food, do offer the same to all of the spirits dwelling in the Ten Directions of Space. We offer to the spirits of those newly dead, and to those long since passed away, and likewise to the Lord-Spirits of mountains and rivers, and soil and waste places."

"Let this power assist all beings towards the Supreme Enlightenment. It is our desire that you may quickly become Buddhas, and thus be fully and finally delivered out of the Hell of Hungry Ghosts."

The temple for the rite stands in a park open to the public.

Its exterior had been colorfully adorned for the occasion. Within its sacred precincts the worship is directed especially to the souls of fallen soldiers, and, accordingly, soldiers stand on guard there continually. Two superb lions, done in olive green and about ten feet in height, also stand at the portals. The walls are hung with long inscribed tablets of religious character.

Immense floral wreaths have been set up by military officials. In the sanctuary are thousands of soul-tablets of deceased soldiers, ranged in long tiers against the wall, each tablet being about a foot in height, red in color and bearing the deceased's name and military rank.

Two auxiliary altars stand to the right and left, each bearing incense, perfumed wood and cloisonne vases. Since the spirits are known as "Hungry Ghosts", very generous amounts of food—cakes, cookies, apples, oranges and pears—are placed on the altar-tables.

Outside the temple the most impressive thing is the "Boat of the Law". The festive vessel stands between the main temple and the lake on which it is to be launched. Buddhism tell us of the "River of Heaven", a kind

of Great Divide between the land of bliss and the inferno. Over this river sainted monks can cross on talismanic boats to aid the souls in hell. The mystic-ship is 55 feet long; three small towers rise from the deck while the national ensign flutters overhead. The vessel is resplendent in a welter of color surpassed only by the robes of the paper passengers, all of whom rank as divinities. The prow of the ship is a huge dragonhead on which stands, poised on one foot like the figure of Hermes, the familiar form of Kuei Wang, Prince of Demons. Wang's stance today is that of a football kicker delivering a 100-yard boot; but the horned gentleman earnestly holds a satanic trident instead of a pigskin.

At eventide the display of fireworks, so necessary for every major feast, commences. The sky-rocketing dragons and fountains of fire delight the huge, milling crowds, but the full harvest-moon with its radiant mellowy light is still by far the most beautiful bit of pyrotechnics in the evening's program.

As the evening wears on to nightfall the lotus lake, on which all the display is being enacted, becomes beautiful beyond description, for now, to the sheen

of moonlight on its placid bosom are added the hundreds and hundreds of jewel-like floating lamps, placed there to light the wandering spirits home. In the green cressets of lotus leaves, in the pink, glowing chalices of lotus blooms, the shining beacons bob and float out over the River of Heaven, until, one by one they disappear—for a spirit hand has found the saving light at last, and with it, peace!

The climax is reached later when the fairy "Boat of the Law" with its crew of paper divinities and monks is launched on the wave, for, tonight the gods

go "down to the sea in ships". Slowly the craft noses out into the deep, all eyes are riveted on the enchanted vessel, sanctified by so many processions and mystic incantations of monks.

The multitude on the shore is breathlessly hushed—then, suddenly, from within its hold, a billowing wave of flame bursts forth; the vessel staggers and reels; gods and guards, monk and rowers, disappear in a blaze of glory; and finally the huge figure of Kuei Wang, the Prince of Demons, dives like a flaming meteor down into the hell of the "Hungry Ghosts".

CHILDHOOD

KNOW you what it is to be a child? It is to be something very different from the man of today. It is to have a spirit yet streaming from the waters of baptism; it is to believe in love, to believe in loveliness, to believe in belief; it is to be so little that the elves can reach to whisper in your ears; it is to turn pumpkins into coaches, and mice into horses, lowliness into loftiness, and nothing into everything, for each child has a fairy godmother in its soul; it is to live in a nutshell and count yourself the king of infinite space.

—Francis Thompson.

In Hoc Signo Vinces

By JEAN PICCARD

Condensed from *The Science Counselor*

OUR stratosphere flight took only seven and three quarters hours, but the preparations were long and eventful.

The great gas bag had been put in condition but there was much work to be done with the gondola. The barometers had to be put in place and connected with the outside. These and many other outlets for wires and tubes had to be made air-tight. The main gas valve, the ballast release, the rip cord, all these are of vital importance for the navigation of a stratosphere balloon.

The scientific program centered around the investigation of the mysterious cosmic rays coming from far away empty space. One important question was: What direction do they come from and, since they come from many directions, what is their strength from various directions?

For this part of the study we were obliged to rotate our instruments around a vertical axis. Unfortunately the instruments were too large to be conveniently rotated within the gondola. We, therefore, decided to rotate the

gondola itself. This involved, however, a new and grave problem; because the gondola was connected to the balloon by many suspension ropes and by several control ropes.

The only solution was to rotate the balloon, gondola and all; for which a small, electrically driven propeller had to be suspended as far out as possible in order to increase its moment.

In a previous flight we had mounted the engine on a large T-shaped wooden support. The two arms of the T were suspended by strings from the equator of the balloon and the main beam was directed, horizontally, toward the gondola. It was carrying the wires. For our last flight we needed as much leverage as possible and we placed the propeller on a fourth arm, a prolongation of the main beam of the T. This gave the whole frame the form of a Latin cross, about eighteen feet long.

While we were making the preparations for our flight, many visitors came to see the balloon which was going to go to the stratosphere. There were teach-

ers, literary men, engineers, men of science, and just people interested in the unusual. During these visits the work for the flight continued, of course. Electricians charged the batteries, mechanics drilled holes for fastening the instruments, and so on.

Among our distinguished visitors one day, while the painters were painting all our instruments in white, was a priest who came with half a dozen seminary students. I have forgotten his name, but I remember that he was a delightful man and we talked about many things. I suggested that, as a souvenir of his visit, he write something on the

*In this sign thou shalt conquer.

big cross. As he hesitated, I said an appropriate dedication would be: "In hoc signo vinces".* He was kind enough to accept my idea and made the inscription in ink with well-shaped large letters.

Half an hour later I discovered to my sorrow that a painter had painted the cross all over. I had neglected to warn him not to paint over the dedication. The priest was still in the hangar and I told him, apologetically:

"I'm sorry, Father, the painters have painted the cross and have painted all over your inscription."

"Never mind," he said, with composure, "It is still there—under the paint."



SKY'S MESSAGE

The heavens tell the glory of God;
And the firmament publisheth the work of His hands.

Day unto day declareth the message;
And night unto night revealeth the knowledge.
It is neither speech nor discourse,
The sound of which may not be heard.

Over the whole earth goeth the sound of them,
And even to the ends of the earth (reach) their words.

In the sun God hath set up His tent;
And he, like a bridegroom coming forth from the bridal chamber,
Exulteth like a hero when he entereth on his path.

On the one boundary of heaven is his rising,
And his course is unto the other.
There is not one who can hide himself from his glow.

King David.

A Chinaman's Tooth

By THE REV. MICHAEL MORAN

Condensed from *The Far East*

I'm tired. I've just been chasing after that student again, and again I have found him out. That is to say, he was out; so I really didn't find him at all. But I found his place in the schoolroom vacant. I touched it with my hand and my worst fears were confirmed. The place wasn't even warm; so the student must have been gone for some time.

He was introduced to me by one of the parishioners. He engaged this good man to bring him along and explain clearly to the Father who he was, his desire to become a Catholic, and his reasons for thinking that he would stand all the tests demanded of new converts. In so doing he had acted wisely, for we regard it prudent procedure to insist that new converts shall be recommended, and, as far as practicable, guaranteed by a reliable Catholic. The "guarantor" must give a clear account of the candidate's life up to the moment of introduction. From this the Father will endeavor to judge for himself what the remainder of his life is likely to be.

His friend was not quite finished speaking when the candidate signified, by an expressive gesture of his hand, his willingness to take up the narrative.

He congratulated his Catholic friend on the just and winning way he had reconstructed his life, but he confessed to a feeling that touching his ancestors—an illustrious line—a great deal more might have been profitably said. He would briefly supply this defect. For the sake of brevity he would not stress his connection with the great men who had lived before the Flood, but as to those who lived after it. I stemmed the flow, somewhat undiplomatically indeed, by a query as to his powers of concentrating on a page of the catechism for six or seven hours daily.

I explained that the first essential for baptism was to learn the catechism. Usually it could be mastered in two or three months. In his case it might be necessary to extend the period somewhat, owing to his great age. Asked if he were really forty-two, as stated by his Cath-

olic friend, he pleaded guilty. I encouraged him by examples from history of men who had effected nothing of note before their forty-second year.

At this point he interrupted with many promises and asseverations of application so prolonged, and concentration so absorbing, that one would be rash to doubt the happy result. Moreover, if at any time he should so far fall short of his resolution as to afford even an incipient suspicion of idleness, then all he requested was to be allowed to administer his own salutary punishment, the severity of which would be ample proof of his sincerity, and would at the same time provide a shining model for students in generations to come.

So he was installed among the boys in school and the uneventful days rolled by. In a short time he came to be known as "Gold Tooth", for the same reason that Blue Beard came to be known as Blue Beard. He had one front tooth, which he had considered worthy of a gold casting. Other teeth he may have had, but they were not visible, and none of the community had occasion or time to explore the hidden depths. However, this one more than atoned for the

probable disappearance of any lesser lights.

One day I came on him in his bed-room. He did not notice me, but as the door was ajar, it was impossible not to see the performance. In his left hand he held a mirror, while in his right he held a small duster and some powder. First, he washed the tooth, wiped it dry and contemplated the effect in the mirror. Then he applied the powder, and ran round the tooth several times with the duster till it shone brightly.

Such is the vanity of our poor nature. There he was, replete with his forty-two years of wisdom, with his illustrious record of ancestors both pre-historic and otherwise—and still weak enough to take such a vain complacency in his artificial molar!

This chance discovery gave me two ideas. First, that Gold Tooth was paying more attention to the laid molar than was either strictly demanded or contemplated in the school time-table. Secondly, that a closer observation of his antics might be advisable. This latter idea I put into practice immediately. I multiplied my visits to the school and at each visit I sought Gold Tooth among the students. The result was nearly always the same as it was

this morning, when, as I have already told you, I found him out.

Even in a clear case of this kind, I must follow the Chinese maxim of "go softly, softly". Nothing could be more disastrous than to precipitate myself into a situation from which I could not gracefully retreat, without loss of prestige. Experience has taught me that no matter how reprehensible his absence may seem, it is always safer to hear his excuses and explanations before taking action.

Have I not often, on similar occasions in the past, worked myself up to such an intensity of heat that I could scarcely restrain myself until his return? Have I not, at such times, and under such provocation, retired to the seclusion of my room and

there prepared such a torrent of incriminating, uncomplimentary, and even abusive language, that under its fire he should immediately have shriveled up and moaned his very existence? Have I not stored my mind with the most incisive epithets, with the wildest invective in the Chinese language—any one of which might be well calculated to "floor" even a superman? And has he not most successfully survived it all?

Some holy man has said that one soul is diocese enough for a bishop. I agree with the holy man; and if the soul in question should be at all like the soul I have been talking about, then in no time His Excellency may find it necessary to apply for a coadjutor. I hope his choice will not alight on me.



VAIN PEOPLE

Vanity is so anchored in the heart of man that a soldier, a soldier's servant, a cook, a porter, brags and wishes to have his admirers. Even philosophers wish for them. Those who write against it want to have the glory of having written well; and those who read it desire the glory of having read it.

I who write this have perhaps the desire, and perhaps those who will read it.

—Pascal.

Anglican Reunion Movement

Church Unity Octave, Jan. 18-25

By a Special Correspondent

Condensed from *The Tablet*

Anyone wishing an experience should attend one of the quarterly meetings held by the papal wing of the Anglo-Catholics in Caxton Hall. Attending one last Monday this writer's first impulse was to fling his cap and rush out to tell his fellow-Catholics all about it.

On the platform a committee of Anglican clergymen, in cassock and biretta, were telling a hall full of Anglicans that "we are in schism, and the sooner it is ended, the better"; that "we are committed to the acceptance of the Holy Father as the divinely-appointed centre of Catholic unity"; that "fidelity to the Faith in its entirety is the greatest glory of the Papacy"; that "one thing the Popes have always done is to teach the fullness of doctrine; they have never compromised with heresy; they will not compromise about that now. If we seek reunion with Rome, we must have the Pope with his doctrine, for that and that only is Rome."

Hundreds of Anglicans punctuated every reference to the Pope with applause. As I tried

to recover my breath they went on to explain the Roman Catholic Faith with the same precision and fervor as we are accustomed to in our own churches —the Mass, the Immaculate Conception, papal infallibility, the sacredness of marriage, etc.

The subjects of the two papers read at this particular meeting were suggestive of an aggressive apostolate: (1) What the laity did in 1536; (2) What the laity might do in 1936. The first speaker described the spirited defense put up by the Yorkshire laity for the old Faith and the Catholic monasteries: they were Englishmen on whom the Reformation had to be forced by German mercenaries and by ruthless repression. If the laity of 1936 showed the same keenness, a great wrong should be righted. Let them live their faith, understand their faith and explain their faith; let them break down the Englishman's prejudices against Rome and the Papacy, and they will see the end of this regrettable schism, by the conversion of the Church of England to the true Faith. The

liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church has made us discover her doctrine; that same liturgy must help us to go a step further and rejoin the Church which has handed us that doctrine untarnished, the Roman Catholic Church under the Papacy.

This was indeed the Kingdom of God at work on wholesale lines. And yet! Were these men sincere? Was this reunion business not a pretext to evade individual conversion? There being something wrong somewhere, I sought an interview after the meeting with one of the clerical leaders, a charming old man whose saintly smile was encouragement enough for the most impudent questions:

"What is the size of this movement?" I asked.

"We are exactly 1,016 clergymen," he replied, "who have these last eight years subscribed to the faith of the Council of Trent, and pledged ourselves to preach it to our parishes. Moreover, some two thousand others are in sympathy with our aims, and join us every year with their parishioners in a Novena for the return of the Anglican Church to the Papacy."

"But is this not discouraging individual reconciliations?"

"We rather encourage them if

they are prompted by God's grace."

"But why do you not join us at once, as you have the faith?"

"What is time in God's designs? I cannot account for it. If God urges three thousand clergymen to preach the Faith to half a million people before minding their own interests first, who will question His Will?"

"And what conditions would you claim for a mass return?"

"No conditions at all. It will be the Pope's business to impose them. Our task is to make ourselves worthy of God's grace to be reunited with the true fold."

"But what about your orders?"

"Well, we naturally believe in them, else we could not do this work, but we are quite aware of Rome's decision, and we must be ready to have our orders rectified in that spirit."

"But is the Anglican Church not hopelessly divided?"

"Yes, but in eight years we have increased to over 3,000 holding the same Faith, i.e., one-fourth of the Anglican clergy in Great Britain. Is this not sufficient sign that God is at last listening to your prayers and ours, though perhaps not in the way you or we expected?"

Stalin, the Man of Steel

Condensed from *The Fleur De Lis*

By JOSEPH F. THORNING, S. J.

Joseph Vissarionovich Djugashvili was born in the Caucasus on the outskirts of Batum. His father and mother were peasants, inured to long hours of toil and expecting little of life save bread and an occasional dish of steaming tea. While Joseph Stalin was still an infant his cobbler father was thrown out of employment by the establishment of a shoe factory in Batum. As a result the little household made its way from country to town. Machinery had come, and the Industrial Revolution had started on his career a child of destiny, the future hero of the proletariat.

Stalin's original vocation was thought to be for the priesthood. At the age of fourteen he entered the Orthodox seminary at Tiflis, where he remained for almost four years. Some claim ill health caused his departure from the monastery; others contend that he was dismissed on the charge of disseminating Socialist literature among his fellow students.

At any rate, the young man soon distinguished himself for

his skill and daring in revolutionary circles. He read and spread radical propaganda. Happening upon an article of Lenin in a secretly circulated magazine called *Iskra* (The Spark) he entered into correspondence with the Bolshevik leader who was in exile at Geneva. In this way Stalin became speedily involved in the subterranean web of conspiracy and violence which spread throughout Europe.

One of the most spectacular episodes of this stage of his career was the bombing of a convoy and robbery of the treasure which was being transported from the Bank of Tiflis to the railroad station. Twelve persons were killed, but Stalin made away with the loot.

The secret police of the Czar, however, were not inactive and Stalin spent five terms in prison and five in exile. Every free moment was devoted to the manuscript of his book, a volume now obligatory reading throughout the Union of Socialist and Soviet Republics. When not working on his papers Stalin organized debates. No one mastered

Karl Marx as thoroughly as did this ardent son of the Caucasus.

The last period of exile occurred in 1913. In the far North, with the temperature at forty below zero, Stalin slaved over another manuscript. A tiny hut was his prison; a tallow candle his sole illumination. A weaker spirit would have become benumbed by the Arctic ice or maddened by the unending solitude. Not so Stalin. To the astonishment of the natives of Turukhansk he trained himself to excel in trapping, hunting, and fishing. The furs of his prey kept him warm, while the game and fish furnished a sturdy diet.

In the spring of 1917 the Empire collapsed and the Kerensky Government granted a pardon to all political prisoners. Stalin returned to Moscow to play his part in the successful uprising of the following October. Lenin and Trotsky were the grand marshalls of Bolshevism, but Stalin was learning valuable lessons of organization and biding his time. Shortly before Lenin's death he was installed as Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party. That was a key position. Whereas Trotsky was making speeches or was often preoccupied by external activities, his rival, Stalin, was

busy gaining adherents in the party. Finally, he felt himself powerful enough to liquidate Trotsky, and with the latter disappeared many of the former intimate associates of Lenin.

It should be noted that the chief ideological point of difference between these two Bolsheviks concerned the strategy of the world-revolution. Trotsky, brilliant dialectician that he was, maintained with Lenin that "the Soviet Union resembled nothing less than a beleaguered fortress as long as it stood lonely among the capitalistic nations surrounding it." For Stalin the world-revolution could wait upon the exigencies of National Socialism. He put an opportunistic emphasis upon the consolidation of collectivism at home before he felt impelled militantly to push Communism as an article of export.

In the struggle for power Stalin was utterly ruthless. Imprisonment, torture, intimidation were among some of his milder measures of "co-ordination".

At the moment Stalin dominates 170,000,000 people occupying one-sixth of the habitable globe. His secret police are ubiquitous. The arm of the dictator reaches into every factory, apartment-house, and collective

farm. These are controlled by political sections" of the Communist party. The party itself is constantly "purged" and purified. Its two million odd members wield an influence far in excess of their numerical strength; and they are supported by the Red Army, one of the most mechanized fighting machines in the world. The machine-gun and the bombing plane, it may be observed, have immensely simplified the task of dictators.

Nevertheless, the man at the apex of the Soviet pyramid, the engineer of world-revolution, is not the official head of the Government in Russia. The President of the Soviet Union is an aging peasant, Mikhail Kalinin.

Stalin rules in virtue of an extra-legal job, that of General Secretary of the Communist party. Of course, he is also a member of the Politburo, but this inner circle of ten Commissars is hand-picked by the party secretary. Only one in this group, Kaganovitch, is a Jew. Although Foreign Commissar Maxim Litvinov is much in the public eye, and recently has been decorated with the Order of Lenin, he has not as yet been admitted to the Cabinet of decemvirs. That will happen only when it seems good to the Man of Steel, the "autocrat of autocrats and the Czar of all the Russias."



RUSSIA IN FRANCE

On February 6, 1934, I was in Paris when the communists' revolt broke out, and let me tell you, I learned more about the brute violence of the mob in that red evening in front of the Chamber of Deputies when the French flag was dragged in the blood of French citizens who were slaughtering each other; I say I learned more in that evening than I could have learned from all the books ever written on the subject.

—Dr. Christian Richard.

A Layman Looks At Liturgy

By DONALD ATTWATER

Condensed from *Orate Fratres*

During the last ten years it has become clearer and clearer that liturgy is not simply a part of the Christian religion: Dom Lambert Beauduin was quite right to call his little book *Liturgy, the Life of the Church*. The Christian life (which includes eating and love-making and playing baseball as well as prayer and almsdeeds) is compounded of an individual life and a corporate life; that corporate life consists essentially in mystical union with Jesus Christ and with our fellow Christians; and that mystical union is objectified on a small scale whenever a number of individuals assist together at the corporate meal, the Sacrifice of the Mass. To assist in the fullest possible way at the sacrament of unity one must receive holy Communion—and at once the whole of one's personal moral life is involved, for to receive holy Communion it is necessary to be in a state of grace, in peace and charity with one's neighbors.

When we find there is little objective corporate religion we know that there is something

abnormal and wrong somewhere, either due to the faithful themselves or to their circumstances.

Religious individualism is rampant today, and great as are the achievements of the "liturgical movement" it has nowhere made any total, permanent and essential difference. Why?

Because the practical expression of our religion and its activities which we call "The Liturgy" is cast in forms entirely foreign to the civilization of today; we offer forms of public worship to people whose mental outlook and life make it all but impossible for them to worship in that way.

Man is a "worshipping animal". The forms of worship favored by the Westerner of 1936 are the rosary, Benediction, stations of the cross, "methods of hearing Mass," this and that "devotion"—forms of worship that are simple and in a language he understands, that enable him to indulge the emotions of piety, remorse and yearning that the cinema has encouraged him to let rip. They are individualistic (many of them were designed

for private devotion, not for congregational use) in accordance with the current notion of religion as "I and my God", that are not redolent of hierarchicalness (most, indeed, do not require a priest's assistance).

This is an age of cultural corruption. The most significant marks of a Christian culture are appreciation of the unity of Christendom and of the Christian orientation of *every lawful human activity*. Where is the mark of Christianity on Jazz, on crooning, on luxury liners, on our financial system, our industrial system, our art (ecclesiastical or other), our politics (international or parish-pump), our social organization? The whole thing stinks, and people brought up to like and admire it cannot be expected to like and admire the Roman liturgy. The way in which worship is carried out is primarily the effect, not the cause, of a manner of life and thought: the Roman liturgy as we have it today is a result of a historical process of living—and the contemporary way of living is in diametrical opposition to the values of that liturgy.

The consequence is that the "liturgical movement" often only succeeds in impressing people with a few theological truths

and accompanying religious observances, without causing them even to question the principles on which their day-to-day life is ordered. An obvious example of this is the ecclesiastical art turned out in the name of the "liturgical movement"; most of it is no more a product of a mentality like to that which produced plain-chant, Chartres, and the Latin Eucharistic ritual than are the productions of the most debased church-furniture shops. It is therefore as unsuitable for use in a Christian church.

Nothing that I have said must be read as an adverse criticism of the "liturgical movement" as such or as a suggestion that its activities should be stayed. On the contrary: ever increasing efforts must be made for the further, deeper and *wider-embracing* diffusion of liturgical worship.

One of the outstanding difficulties in the way of recommending the liturgy in all its aspects to the use of the faithful is how to disabuse their minds of the idea that it is an optional thing that we are free to neglect if we choose, just one more "devotion", another "method of hearing Mass". I venture to think that in this difficult job we ought to make much more use

than we do of the natural arguments in its favor, e.g., the nature of man as a social animal, his appetite for singing, the external fittingness of the various rites, and so on. Take the chant, for instance. *Blind* obedience to the *Motu proprio* of Pope Pius X does not produce satisfactory results. Enlighten obedience, then, by a consideration of the *intrinsic perfection of plain-chant considered simply as music*. "I don't like it" is no answer: I personally don't like the poetry of Milton, but that does not alter the fact that it is great poetry.

But the first and last thing for us to bear in mind is that our own contemporary cultural environment is made up of what we see and hear and think *outside church*. Chaucer's boy sang "*Angelus ad virginem*" as he went about his lawful (or unlawful) occupations because that was the sort of music he heard most often and knew best; we sing the gems of Bing Crosby and Connie Boswell for the same reason. That sort of thing more than anything else is what prevents our communal worship from being spontaneously liturgical. The conditions of our social and industrial life induce a culture of their own, violently

artificial and grossly unhuman, but now generally accepted by Catholics as by everybody else, as quite natural. The consequence is that the universal goodness of the liturgy in all its aspects is not seen; it repels people as something foreign to their "natural" taste and inclination; if they accept it, under obedience or blind enthusiasm, they make an unholy mess of it because they do not really understand it. *The "liturgical movement" will cease to be a limited movement tinkering with the symptoms of our disease, and become really constructive and spirit-healing, only when the conditions of our social and industrial life have been changed for others that are not fundamentally incompatible with Christianity.* That will not be for a very long time, but, since Christianity is of God, it must happen sooner or later in any society that continues to be consciously Christian.

It is not, then, enough to change our attitude towards public worship, though that is indeed important. What we think of the world must be changed as well. Meantime, since we must live, we must use the present culture; but we must not forget to know it for what it is.

General Franco

Condensed from *The Tablet*

By a former member of the Cortes

In 1921 when Millan Astray formed the Spanish Foreign Legion, he looked for an officer with these three qualities: intelligence, courage, and tact. He found them in Captain Franco, who was thus called upon to fill one of the most dangerous and difficult posts in the Spanish army at that time. But he performed this arduous and delicate task with consummate skill. In his dealings with the Moroccans Franco was not an officer of the old school which considered the object to be attained in colonial war the conquest of the native by any means, however harsh. He was the representative, in the Spanish army, of the new school whose tendency it was to look on the Moslem inhabitants not as inveterate enemies to be exterminated, but as fellow subjects to be cared for. Thus Franco has taken his place in that group of Christian colonial officers, the pride of civilized Europe, which contains such glorious names as that of Lyautey.

Franco, as a young colonel, was the same happy-hearted officer as before. A great reader,

he was well up in the military history of Europe; thus he was peculiarly fitted for the post he filled later, Headmaster of the Central Military School in Spain. The Spanish cadets became in their turn as passionately devoted to him as his Moorish soldiers. By his insistence on honor and duty to the point of sacrifice, he sowed the seeds of heroism which afterwards were to reproduce the "men of Toledo steel", the defenders of the Alcazar. Franco, as Colonel or General, has always been the same efficient officer, strict but intelligently so.

The leader of the Nationalist Movement belongs to a middle-class family. Of his three brothers two are engineers, the other is the famous airman Ramon Franco, who flew the Atlantic in 1928 in the *Plus-Ultra*.

His Ideas.

I have already said that Franco felt no inclination to politics. How, then, was it that circumstances placed Franco in the Nationalist Movement? In 1934 Gil Robles, the lead of the Right party, who was then Minister of

War, called on Franco, as military expert, to help him in the organization of the services, and the improvement of methods of defense.

From such a point Franco was to assist at an astounding event. He had already seen how an old Monarchy had given up the country to Republican leaders who had won the ordinary municipal elections, presided over by the King's last Cabinet. As a result, the King, fearing the consequence of resistance, left Spain; and the Republic was proclaimed in an atmosphere of calm which is to the credit of both winners and losers. And now from the Ministry, Franco beheld the spectacle of the Left parties, headed by Azana, failing to recognize a Parliament in which the Right and Centre parties had obtained an overwhelming majority. Later on, Franco was to witness another event inexplicable to an impartial observer. Those very politicians who had severely condemned Sanjurjo's rebellion of August 10th, 1933, themselves refused to respect the decision of the President of the Republic; but materially or morally upheld the armed rebellion which broke out in October, 1934.

Franco, therefore, was still

more astounded to hear the Parliament, elected under the Left government, called illegitimate, and Largo Caballero, at his trial, denying solidarity with the rebellion which he had fomented.

He left his post at the Ministry of War with his patriotic feelings wounded by seeing how civilians refused allegiance to the Government whenever they lost in the game of politics. In spite of this he did not yet consider himself justified in interfering in politics.

The politicians had first to split the people of Spain into factions; the assassination of party men of both sides had to become chronic, culminating in Calvo Sotelo's murder; that atmosphere of disorder and violence, in which a society has to choose between a dictatorship and anarchy, had to exist before Franco deemed it his duty to forestall the Communist stratagems and to declare to his countrymen that Spain was in danger. Thereupon Franco became automatically the leader of a patriotic movement extraordinary in its intensity and extent.

Has Franco the same significance for the Nationalists as Mussolini for the Fascists or Hitler for the Nazis? Not quite. Among the leaders of the author-

itarian States, Franco in his mentality and plans is nearer to Dr. Oliveira Salazar, the Dictator of Portugal.

One of his main thoughts seems to be expressed in the famous words: "Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to nought."

He declares that every Spaniard, without exception, must work; for the new State cannot maintain parasites. This State will have a concordat with the Church, following the national tradition and the religious beliefs of its people, without infringing on the privilege of the State to exercise its functions.

As regards international affairs Franco considers the New Spain to be incompatible with the Soviet Republic; but he affirms his intention to live in harmony with other countries.

His Methods.

From the outset of the war Franco has shown a cool-headedness unusual in the Latin. At the beginning no one garrison was hostile; but three of them (Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia) had been beaten by the armed followers of the government. From the first, the fleet was equally balanced between the two parties.

At the same time Franco has

not the advantage in the air. That is why he could not control the Straits of Gibraltar. Besides all this, the Nationalist leader found that the government followers, using in Spain the tactics of the Russian revolutionaries, had let loose a reign of terror with all its tragic consequences. Face to face with all these obstacles was the man Franco with his tenacity. He took the initiative and, starting operations from Seville, succeeding in uniting the Southern and Northern armies without a single defeat. He delivered towns of such importance as Irun, San Sebastian, Badajoz, Talavera and Toledo; wrested from his enemies the domination of sea and air. Now he threatens the Spanish capital where the resistance of the defenders is as extraordinary as that of Irun, aided likewise by foreign reds. His tactics have not yet failed and it is to be presumed that just as Toledo and Irun, Madrid will fall when public opinion least expects it.

Franco's love of truth, together with a laconic brevity of speech, is remarkable. Anyone who reads over his bulletins will find that they are concise and free from boasting. He is reserved in his declarations to the press, and even when he talks to

his thousands of followers thronging the Plaza Mayor in Burgos or Salamanca, he is brief and concise.

Here we find two qualities which are in striking contrast with the verbosity of Largo Caballero and his ministers who talk endlessly and recklessly, denying one day, without a blush,

what they have affirmed the day before.

Lastly, we must remark that Franco knows how to pick men. The officers who, with him, direct the operation of war are cleverly chosen; as regards the task of the government he has succeeded in forming a kind of "brain staff", quite unlike anything hitherto known in Spain.

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"The little of the world I have seen teaches me to look upon the errors of others in sorrow, not in anger. When I take the history of one poor heart that has sinned and suffered, and represent to myself the struggles and temptations it has passed through, the brief pulsation of joy, the feverish inquietude of hope and fear, the pressure of want, the desertion of friends, I would fain leave the erring soul of my fellow man with Him from whose hand it came."

Longfellow.

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— BOOKS —

These are the masters who instruct us without rods and ferules, without hard words and anger, without clothes or money. If you approach them, they are not asleep; if investigating you interrogate them, they conceal nothing; if you mistake them, they never grumble; if you are ignorant, they cannot laugh at you. The library, therefore, of wisdom is more precious than all riches, and nothing that can be wished for is worthy to be compared with it. Whosoever therefore acknowledges himself to be a zealous follower of truth, of happiness, of wisdom, of science, or even of the faith, must of necessity make himself a lover of books.

Richard de Bury (1344)

We read the first issue of The Catholic Digest with interest and wish to felicitate you on it. It is heartening to know the fine response it is receiving.

—Richard Reid.



The idea behind this Catholic Digest is one that has proved tremendously popular for secular publications. A vast amount of ground is covered succinctly and tellingly. Covering a wide range, the articles touch upon present thought in which many people are interested. The person of limited leisure may scan the field of Catholic thought in an incredibly short time. "The Catholic Book and Magazine Digest" is a worthwhile undertaking that should win a large following.

—*Boston Pilot, Christmas Edition, 1936.*



This new Catholic Digest deserves a wide circulation. Its appeal is popular enough to win a welcome place in the average Catholic home. Left handy in the library or living room for the family or in the pocket of a business suit or brief case it can be used to coin odd moments of leisure or travel into valuable currency of knowledge or mental pleasure.

—*Evangelist, Dec. 4, 1936.*



Permit me to offer sincerest congratulations on what I consider to be decidedly a worthwhile enterprise. The first issue of the DICAST gives abundant evidence of your determination to execute the idea in a manner worthy of its importance.

Rev. James A. Byrnes.

NOTICES

1. The Catholic Digest will furnish information on any of the magazines it mentions; it will forward correspondence to them if its readers wish. Most Catholic magazines will be glad to send sample copies to the curious. We shall also act as agents for the purchase of any book readers wish to order.
2. There are Catholic publications, most of them in colleges and universities, which contain excellent and carefully supervised writing. The Catholic Digest invites editors of such publications to submit a copy to this address. Most frequent remark of Digest readers—I had no idea there were so many Catholic magazines.
3. Let readers continue to vote on the best article by means of post card. Merely address a card to us saying which article you like best. The editors want your opinion for guidance. Results of voting on previous issues will be announced next month.

Let pastors write us for details of a Lenten plan to promote Catholic reading in general (not only for the Digest).